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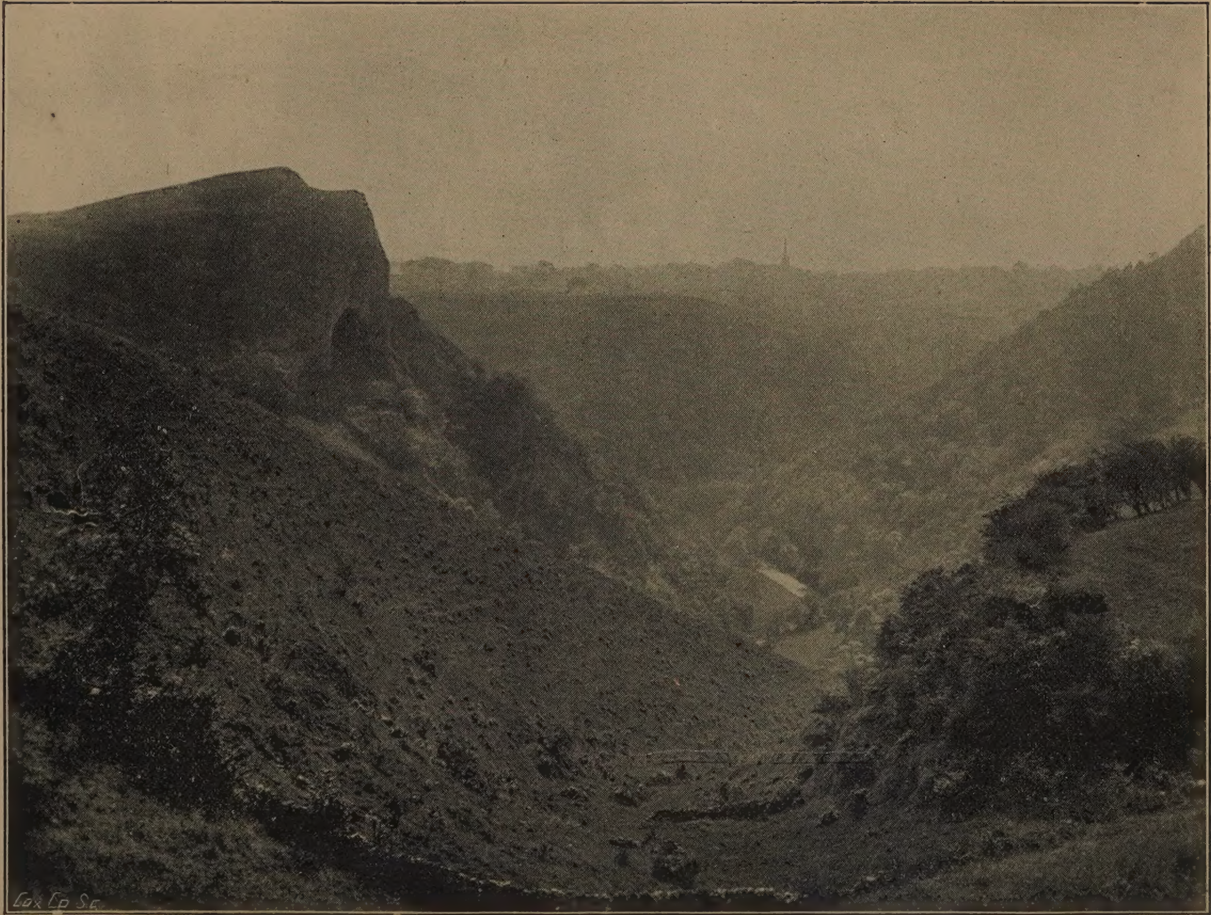

W. H. Horne, Leek.

THORS HOUSE CAVE, VALLEY OF THE MANIFOLD.

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HISTORIC STAFFORDSHIRE.

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BY

ROBERT K. DENT, AND JOSEPH HILL,

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THE BRIDESTONES, BIDDULPH.

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PREFACE.

THIS work does not claim to be a history of the county of Stafford, or even a topographical enumeration of all its characteristic features. To do this would require a work planned on a far different scale, and would have led to a wide departure from the scope of the series of which this work forms a volume. It has rather been the task of the writers to bring into prominence those episodes in the history of the county in which it has touched the history of the realm, and to call up memories of famous sons of the shire.

For Staffordshire has played no unimportant part in the history of England. It was within this shire that the throne was cradled and grew up to lusty youth. Here the early Saxon rulers had their home and lived their lives. Within the boundaries of the shire lived many noble and illustrious families, whose share in the making of history has been great. The names of Ranulph, Earl of Chester, of Ferrers, Basset, Verdun, Dudley, Devereux, and others, have loomed large in the history of England, and their doings have afforded fitting subjects for various chapters of this work.

In the strife of factions and parties, which have at various periods rent and disturbed the kingdom, Staffordshire has played a prominent part, from the struggles of Saxon and Dane down to the last stand made by a Stuart against the House of Hanover; and in the not less important conquests achieved by our captains of industry in widely different fields of enterprise, Staffordshire has been pre-eminent.

To record these great achievements has been our chief task, and in doing this we have had to pass over other important phases in the life of our country. It has been to our regret that from the lack of historical associations of sufficient prominence, many places of considerable local importance, some of them possessing more than local interest, have received but slight notice in these pages. This, it will be noticed, is largely the case with the great industrial centres—the pottery towns of Stoke, Hanley, Newcastle, and Burslem, and some of the towns in the iron district, such as Walsall, Wednesbury, Bilston, Tipton, and West Bromwich. For a similar reason some of the historic families of the shire, such as the offshoots of the Verdun family—including the Wrottesleys (deservedly honoured, not only by antiquarians, but by all lovers of history), the Giffards, and the great family of Talbot, the noble possessors of the baronial estate of Alton, which, as Alveton, was a possession of the first Norman bearer of the name, have been accorded little more than a mere passing notice.

Our thanks are due to many kind friends who have greatly assisted us during the progress of the work. To P. L. Brocklehurst, Esq., Messrs. J. Cotton, J. Garland, J. Harrison, J. Gale, B. Karleese, and J. L. Allday, for the loan of photographs, prints, and drawings; and to the Rev. G. H. Hinchliffe, the Rev. A. L. Chattaway, Messrs. W. B. Bickley, W. Salt Brassington, F.S.A., J. Fox, G. Hamersly, Richard Savage, G. Osborne, and other friends, for the loan of books and papers, or for valuable suggestions as to the work, we desire to express our gratitude, for the help they have afforded us.

THE FIVE ROCHES.

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HANDSACRE HALL AND MOAT.

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HISTORIC STAFFORDSHIRE.

Introductory.

AMONG the Counties of England Staffordshire is exceeded in area and population by many of less note, standing eighteenth in regard to area, and sixth in population; in the extent of its agriculture it is surpassed by many counties; in the magnitude of its industries it is distanced by two competitors, but in the wealth of its resources it must take the first place. In the products of the earth it is peerless. In no other county are the treasures of the soil found in greater abundance; its wealth of ironstone and coal, as well as of fine clay for the potter and the artificer is proverbial, and it has also a most abundant supply of enduring stone for building purposes—limestone, freestone, and alabaster. In the variety of its industries it is without a rival. It includes among its productive resources extensive potteries and china works, covering an area equalling that of one of the smaller counties, silk and cotton mills, glass works, iron works, extensive engineering works, several coal fields, large and world-famous breweries, and maintains a population numbering more than a million.

Thus advantaged in its industrial resources, it has also natural charms of the highest order. In the scenic beauties of forest and river, cliff and chasm, hill and valley, moorland and plain, it is rich beyond compare; and the full charm and variety of its scenery is known to few even of its own inhabitants.

The moorlander of the north is ignorant of the lower Trent, of the expanse of Cannock Chase (oft likened to the Highlands of Scotland), of the valleys of the Tame and Blackbrook, or of the idyllic beauty of the Chillington district, or the more prominent features of Kinver and the Stour, or of Arley and the Severn. Still less does the toiler amid the mirk of the Black Country know of the glories of the extensive moorland, of the rugged mountainous Roches of Leek and the Cliffs of Ipstone, of the valley of the rushing Dane or the waters of Rudyard, of the gigantic heights of Hen Cloud, of Mow Cop, Bunster, and Thorpe Cloud. What knows he of the wood-crowned heights of Ilam, of the entrancing beauty of Deepdale and Narrowdale, of Beeston Tor and Thors-House Cavern, or the unequalled beauties of glorious Dovedale?

THE MANIFOLD, ILAM PARK.

What county can compare with this in its waters? Drayton has sung the praises of its Tame and Dove, its Trent and Severn, but the Dane and Tean, the Stour and the Sow, the Blithe and the Penk, the Churnet and Blackbrook, although unsung, are equally worthy of the poet's theme, whilst the Hamps and Manifold, running as they do in subterraneous darkness for many miles, and rising again amid a scene of picturesque beauty at

Ilam, not only create a feeling of admiration and wonder, but are probably unrivalled in the kingdom.

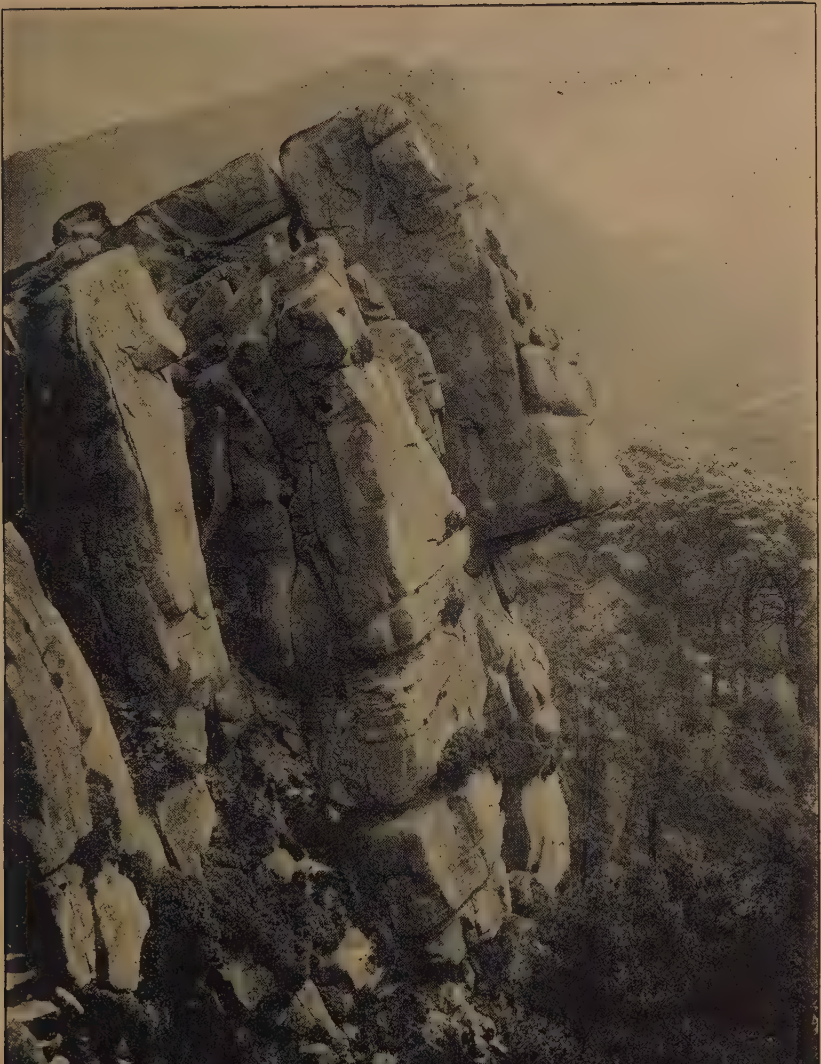
The want of familiarity with the remarkable scenery of the northern part of the shire may be attributed to the changed method of travelling, and the substitution of railways for the old stage coaches. Several of the old northern coach routes lay directly through or near the county, and old time travellers had an easy habit of posting at leisure from town to town, resting at their inn as inclination led, filling note books with their impressions, or with extracts from guide books, whilst the poorer wayfarers, who made their journeys on foot guided by road books, or by finger posts, became acquainted with beauties to which the modern booked-through passenger is a stranger. Thus occasionally we meet with some old account of the remarkable scenery in Staffordshire, which seems to modern readers a mere fable, or a recounting of glories long since faded away.

But if, instead of a century back, we seek the aspect of our county in the middle ages, ere the southern surface was scarred and distorted by the construction of vast works for the winning and working of its mineral wealth, and the sky became veiled with a canopy of smoke, ere its woods, near and far, were consumed for smelting its ore, when from Barr Beacon to Wulfruna's town—from Dudley's walls to the fringe of Cannock's woodland was a continuous stretch of hill and dale, we shall readily discern that nature had been lavish with its varied charms, and for the glories of landscape, of wood, waste, and water this central land stood pre-eminent in fair England.

In that far off time the clay beneath the pottery towns lay undisturbed save by the ploughs of the villagers in the common fields. Then, too, the far-reaching forest of Needwood stretched from Dove to Trent, and the still more extensive Royal Forest of *Canok*, an expanse of woodland and moorland broken only by the settlement vills or towns within its bounds, joined hands with the great Arden at Drayton and Sutton on the south, and reached to Tixall and Stafford on the north; again, the limits of the royal forest of Kinver comprised the whole hundred of Seisden, from Wolverhampton to Severn's bank on the extreme border of the shire,—and to these vast woodlands we may add the forests of Macclesfield and of Leek, the Lyme Wood belt, which for nearly thirty miles formed a mark or wood-boundary from Cheshire, and the innumerable wooded lands throughout the county, many of which still survive.

Nor are we dependant alone upon imagination in this conception of the past, for woods of ancient growth are still common, oaks and other trees of gigantic growth still exist, and many of fabulous size, long since fallen, are recorded, all which help us to a conception of the primeval aspect of our county in ancient Britain.

Such is the county, whose historical associations, traditions, and stories are to form the subject matter of the ensuing pages of this volume.



W. H. Horne, *Leek.*

LEEK ROCHES. THE HIGH ROCHE.

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The Upbuilding of Mercia.

IN the earliest traces of authentic history we find that the central part of Romanized Britain was peopled by the Cornabii, or Cornavii, that the part of their territory familiar to us by the metes and bounds of Staffordshire was its centre, and that its limits extended considerably over the present borders of Cheshire, Salop, and Warwick, and also, but to a more limited extent, of Derby, Leicester, and Worcester.

If physical geography did not point out with absolute clearness that this central part of their land comprised many of the strongholds, cities, and stations of its inhabitants, we have abundant evidence of the fact in the survival of tumuli, earthworks, and roads, and the widely-distributed remains of British and Roman occupation, which from time to time have been brought to light.

But while we have this general knowledge of pre-Saxon days there is no part of England so barren of historic facts, from the desertion by the Roman forces, in 411, until the close of the sixth century (when the country, from the Channel to the Forth, was subjected and newly-peopled by the Jutes, Saxons, and Engles) as that part of central Britain of which our Staffordshire is the heart.

Nothing is more surprising in the history of our country than the fact that during that long and desperate resistance to the hordes of barbarian invaders of Pict and Scot, of Saxon, of Jute, and finally of the Engle or English, no note has survived of the fate of the Midlander. For 200 years the work of uprooting the Briton from his native woods was carried on with increasing activity. South, East, and North the shore was wrested and held. Little kingdoms were created and civil dissensions arose among the invaders, but in the land now known as Stafford, with parts of Derby, Warwick, Leicester, Cheshire, and Salop, there is good ground for the belief that the inhabitants remained in their native fastnesses, and the civilized Britons carried on their trade and commerce in the city stations upon the old highways.

During this lengthened period, even the methods of war and conquest must have greatly changed. With the displacement of the Briton going on around them, with the grip of the invader ever tightening its hold, and the area of their territory ever narrowing, every new conquest must have taught them the utter futility of resistance, as, notwithstanding their stubborn opposition, their countrymen everywhere found themselves driven before the invading forces, and even their cherished love of country must at last have yielded to necessity. When the inevitable came, the conquest of this people was consummated in so uneventful a manner, that not a vestige of record survives to tell the tale, and how the centre of the land of the Cornavii developed into the land of the West Engle and grew into the dignity of a kingdom will ever remain a mystery, and its founders, save for one solitary name, will ever remain unknown.

All we do know, and probably all we ever shall know, is that this central land, rich in its picturesque beauty, with its hills and moorland, craggy peaks and rushing waters to the north, its great forests and fertile vales to the south, was eventually lost to its old people.; the songs of its bards were heard no more, and its sacred temples passed away. If not actually the last of the old tribal territories colonized by the Anglo-Saxon, it was virtually so, save those parts nearer the Severn which successively yielded to the disturbers as they pushed forward their frontier line.

The displacement of the native tribes in other parts of the island was the gradual work of a century and a half, and the stubborn struggles whereby it was effected have been recorded in various ways. By this light we are guided to the final conquest of Central Britain. A lengthened and wearying period of devastating war and of ruthless slaughter, a gradual spreading of the earlier settlers in Kent, East Sax, South Sax, and West Sax, was followed on the East shore by the North and South folk, another North

OAKS IN NEEDWOOD FOREST.

German people (the Engle men), a race destined eventually to dominate the greater part of our land; and whilst the Saxons came in detachments the Engles transferred themselves bodily, and, with their coming, the whole of the eastern sea-front far away to the north was wrested from the Briton, and the conquest of the inner territory only remained to be effected, and this became merely a question of time.

The earlier conquests of the Engle race had covered a great space of time, and they may have commenced their western advance ere their conquest in the north was complete.

The central land, which was eventually to become their greatest conquest, was occupied or annexed as the result of three separate movements, and possibly as to the first two by different people from different parts of the Engle coast; thus the land now forming Notts and East Derby roughly defines one settlement, that known as the North Engle; and that forming Leicester, Rutland, and Northants roughly defines another settlement, known as that of the Mid Engle.

At this period, which may inferentially be fixed at about the year 550, Staffordshire, together with portions of the counties now surrounding it, was therefore unconquered, and perhaps untouched, and it was to this point that the last of the three incursions was to be directed, and problems of interest arise as to the completion of the last of the Engle settlements and the founding of the new Kingdom of Mercia, which speedily became the greatest and most powerful.

If the advance of the invaders westward was made by the North Engle forces through Notts and Derby, it would be confined to the comparatively narrow limit roughly definable as the great valley of the Trent, until it struck the Roman Ikenild or Rykenild way. Any other approach from the east to Southern Cheshire on the one hand would be rendered impracticable by the barren peak land of Derby, and to the Northern part of Warwick on the other by the impenetrable barrier of the great forest of Arden. If, however, the advance was made by the lower Mid Engle of Leicester, it would still be forced towards the same point by the Watling Way, skirting Arden until it reached the Tame near Tamworth, whilst an invasion by the same people from the Soar, in a more southernly course through the valleys of Northants, to the felden of Southern Warwick (and such an advance was probably made) would lead to distinct settlements, and a junction with the Engle forces about the upper Trent was as yet an impossibility.

South-East and North the ever-increasing forces of the Saxon and Engle were driving the natives forward. Every advance gave the invader the mastery of the Roman ways, thus in the western advance of the Engle their footing in the heart of Leicester was made sure by the control of the Fossway and the destruction of the Roman city of Ratæ, near the modern Leicester. Thus safe in their rear they commenced the conquest of the fertile valleys between the forests reaching through the heart of England to the Severn.

THE TRENT AT WOLSLEY BRIDGE.

Pushing along the banks of the Trent the Roman Rykenild, or Ikenild, Way was reached near Repton, and the valley and road hence to Burton. Braunston, Alrewas, Lichfield, and Tamworth gave to the invader the junctions of Dove, Anker, Meuse, and Tame, and by the Sow, Churnet, and other tributary waters, opened ways which completely surrounded the wilds of Needwood and Cannock. Thus, by probably slow and gradual steps, the Engle at length became master of the clay and coal land of Mid-Stafford and the undulating country to the fringe of Arden. Practically isolated from the North Engle and the Mid-Engle settlements on the east, stayed by the great rugged moorlands on the north, and by the impregnable wood on the Cheshire border, (subsequently their mark, lyme, or limit on the north-west, by Arden on the south,) and as yet prevented by the presence of the desperate native forces and the great but doomed city of Uriconium from pushing further west than the neighbourhood of

W. H. Horne, *Leek.*

HEN CLOUD AND THE ROCHES,

The Northern Boundary of Mercland.

Oakengates—although the control of the Watling Way thus far had passed into their hands—the third Engle colony settled down as that of the West Engle, and by the still more definite title of the men of the Markenric, or Mearkenland.

When this conquest began, or when it ended, we know not, but during the six years, 577 to 583, the West Saxon, under Ceawlin, had pushed inland to Gloucestershire, and, from his base on the lower Severn, was raiding in force along the Severn valley, his forces passed onwards from the Wrekin, and the fair and extensive city of Uriconium was left a charred and deserted ruin.

The attack and sacking of the city must have been sudden and unexpected, for penetrating further Cealwin's army was defeated and forced to retreat, but this great southern advance and failure must have considerably affected the settlement of the West Engle, and may, perchance, by driving the natives into their arms have promoted a treaty, with a defined mark or boundary between the two people.

That some such event operated to fix the last new Engle settlement on a permanent footing is most probable, for we now obtain our first historic light in the chronicle that Crida was made King of Mercia, but of his right to assume a chieftain's title save the statement that he was descended from Witheley, the second son of Woden, we know nothing—when and whence he came is unrecorded, even the original extent of his little kingdom is practically unwritten.

Guided, however, by the fact that the new kingdom adopted for a name that of the Men of the Merc, we may infer that Crida was the leader of the Engle folk, who had proceeded farthest inland in their conquests, and, further, that as the north Engle people of the peak country, with the Mid Engle of Leicestershire, together with the South Engle, extending south to Bedfordshire, were, at an early subsequent period, all included within the limits of the Mercian rule, it may be concluded that he was an Ældorman trusted by all the Engle tribes, and whilst he may heretofore have been but a local leader in and about our shire of Stafford, from Marchamley in Salop to Marchington on the Dove, from the Borderland about the Churnet to Crida's Worth on the Tame, he or his immediate successor speedily governed the three Engle settlements, with their rapidly-extending bounds. He, therefore, belongs now to a wider area, and his name to that great central kingdom which hereafter plays an important part in the making of the English nation.

DOVEDALE.

Pagan and Christian.

CRIDA, the leader of the conquerors of Mid England, the founder of the Mercian kingdom, became ruler at an advanced age, and dying after a brief reign in 595, Wybba, or Pybba, became his successor.

That Wybba was the son of Crida is generally accepted, the hereditary succession therefore is a proof that the kingdom of so recent a growth had already been organized under laws to which the people were accustomed. The habits of the Saxon races differed greatly from those of the Briton. Instead of herding together in the safer retreats of wood and mountain, as did the native tribes, or in the fortified cities and stations as the Romanized portion of the population, the new settlers spread themselves over the land which most invited cultivation. Each chief, with his followers, put together a homestead, surrounded by a few temporary buildings, and founded a Tun, Ham, or Worth; and by a just division partitioned the occupancy of the soil, which, with the land of the lord, was tilled by the little community, thus forming the lordship, or manor, which has come down to our own times. They

THE VALLEY OF THE DOVE.

lived under laws with which all were familiar—laws and customs which with but little change continued for 1000 years, and whilst each village shared in its own local government, questions of a wider import were settled at the greater Court of the hundred, and those again of still greater scope by the grouped representatives at the higher gathering or Folk Moot, and by the decision of the latter the selection of a new king from the family of the last king would be made.

To support and defend the boundary or frontier line on the western parts of the new kingdom would, during the first twenty years of its existence, be the chief responsibility of its kings, and it was upon or near the present borders of Staffordshire that defence was most needed. Those places, therefore, which were afterwards associated with the later kings—the Burgh and Camp at Maer, Bury Bank, Stone, Kinver, Chesterton, Stafford, and such strategetic points as Tamworth, Kingsbury, Lichfield, Repton, and Tutbury, were probably among the most-used stations of Crida, Wybba, and Cearl, and until the later acquisition of new territory the seats of the court of the kings.

But with the accession of Penda, the grandson of Crida, Mercia rapidly developed, and by new conquests its boundaries were largely extended. If war and bloodshed make kings great, Penda was the greatest of his age. As Crida was the founder so was Penda the maker of Mercia. His exclusion from the kingship by Cearl may have largely influenced his character; he appears to have recovered it by force, as by force he upheld it. Of his early years, however, little is recorded, but with the development of his career as a warrior history accords him prominence.

The conquest of North Warwick, South Cheshire, with Shropshire and Worcester, to the Severn, may in part have been already accomplished, but the overthrow in battle of the hitherto friendly, if not allied, Saxons at Cirencester, and the addition of Gloucestershire and Hereford to his kingdom, were merely preludes to a career of conquest which led him north, east, and south, and eventually made him supreme from the Thames to the Humber, from the Severn to the coast of Norfolk.

Social influences may probably have contributed to the growth of the Midland Kingdom, originally a petty province, existing upon sufferance of the older kingdoms near the coast, its fertile valleys may have attracted adventurous settlers, and the advantage of an undisputed water-way to the Humber, and a long period of peace, may have largely contributed to a rapid development exceeding that of all the other kingdoms.

During Penda's reign his people comprised many different tribes or clans, and he found it politic to constitute the Mid-Engle, or Leicester folk, a sub-kingdom under his son Peada, a fact which considerably strengthens the probability that Staffordshire still remained the chief or central seat of Penda's extended dominions.

Nearing his 80th birthday Penda might fitly have ended his days in peace, but watchful and eager for new conquests he attempted the subjection of his northern rival. In 655 he fought his last battle and failed, he was slain whilst fighting among his followers, and at one blow the conquests of a lifetime were lost, his enemies were avenged, and the triumphant songs of the conqueror heralded the downfall of the great kingdom he had built up.

King Oswin, the conqueror, the father-in-law of Peada, took possession of Mercia, he even removed Peada from the sovereignty of Leicester, but permitted him to rule a land almost identical with that which originally formed the Markland, in other words of Staffordshire and portions of the surrounding shires. All other portions fell away to fragmentary states.

But, great as were these changes, others yet greater speedily followed. Mercia had steadfastly held to the old superstitions in their temples—the gods of Woden were still invoked. Under the power of the northern ruler Peada pushed forward the new worship and the new priesthood. The first bishop was the Saxon Diuma, whom, with three Saxon priests, he had caused to be sent from Lindisfarne, but whether first located at Lichfield or temporarily at Repton, near Burton, is uncertain. Scarcely had this taken place when Peada, for reasons which are unrecorded, was treacherously murdered by his wife and mother-in-law, and Oswin seized upon the little remnant of a kingdom and held it for more than two years, and under his rule another northern bishop, Cellagh, succeded Diuma.

Penda had, however, left four sons other than Peada. Saxon and Engle alike had a cherished custom of choosing their own rulers, and their choice fell upon Wulfhere, the next in seniority [A.D. 658]. Wulfhere had hitherto, it is said, remained in hiding, but Oswin had now to contend with a man of commanding ability, who with the vigour of manhood combined a knowledge of war. The revolt, which was not confined to Staffordshire, was thorough and complete,—Oswin was driven back, his power in the Midlands finally overthrown, and Wulfhere during sixteen years led the men of Mercia to new conquests. He speedily attached Cheshire as far as the port of Chester. In Hereford he set up a sub-kingdom for his younger brother Merewald, penetrated to the centre of Wessex, conquered the Isle of Wight, marched along the valley of the Thames to Surrey and Sussex, and from the Mersey to the south coast, from Lincoln to Bristol, his supremacy was acknowledged.

But it is with his Staffordshire connection we have chiefly to deal. The sparsity of historic record as to the Mercian Kingdom had come to an end. By reckless bloodshed its rulers had earned the respect of the chroniclers, and although their tales are oft contradictory, oft fabulous, and oftener devoid of all truth. The story of St. Chad and the youthful sons of Wulfhere, has in its main features lived unaltered for twelve centuries, and is, perhaps, as worthy of belief as many of the chronicles of the time. Although Wulfhere is said to have professed Christianity upon his marriage with Ermenilda of Kent, it can scarcely be doubted that he really became a Christian, after, and not previous to, his selection as King; by him, Cellagh, the Lichfield Bishop, was driven from his territory, and indeed his Paganism was a necessity in the choice of the people. Whatever may have been the cause of his conversion, it is undoubted that he promoted Christianity from a very early period of his reign, for in the year 661, the West Saxon King was baptised at his persuasion, and thus far the story of his son's murder, and of his subsequent conversion are supported.

So far as a Saxon king may be said to live at any one spot, Wulfhere fixed his home at Bury, or Berry Bank, a hill over-looking the Trent. The stronghold became known as *Wulferecester*, and the town of Stone is its modern representative. Here occurred the oft-told tragedy of Wulfade and Ruffinè, the story of which will be told in the succeeding chapter.

Whatever may have been the cause of Wulfhere's conversion, it is remarkable that his family became distinguished for its support of Christianity. We have seen the conversion of Penda's two sons—Peada and Wulfhere. Their sister became famous as St. Audry, in connection with the cathedral of Ely; whilst another sister—Cyneberg—married the Christian Prince Alfred of Northumbria, and afterwards became a nun. Peada commenced, and his brother Wulfhere completed, the foundation of the famous Abbey of Peterborough, the Medehampstead and golden city of early days. Yet another son of Penda—Æthelred,—who succeeded Wulfhere as King of Mercia, by division of his kingdom into separate sees, gave Christianity stability and a new life; and, after a reign of 29 years, in 704, gave up his crown to his nephew, Cenred, son of Wulfhere, and retired to the Abbey of Bardney, Lincolnshire, founded by his wife, Osthryth remaining a monk there until his death in 716.

Nor does this end the story of self-abnegation, for Cenred, the son of Wulfhere, after a short reign of five years, at the persuasion of his aunt Cyneswitha, gave up his kingship, and turned monk; whilst another of Wulfhere's children, the saintly Werbergh, became famous throughout and beyond the limits of Mercia. By her uncle, Æthelred, she was placed at the head of three great convents of women, with a spiritual charge in the new Christian state, over all females whose lives were devoted to religion. She is said to have founded the first church at Chester, and died about 700, and when, two centuries later, the great Æthelfleda, a daughter of Alfred, founded the Abbey of Chester, she dedicated it to St. Werbergh.

Among the peculiar and varied causes which have operated in the beatification of saints of all nations—that which enrolled Werbergh's name deserves recording:—About eight years after burial, her coffin was opened and her body was found completely preserved and unaltered, even to the vestments. This was accepted as a miracle, and in the course of a few years, or by the time of Æthelbald, who succeeded his cousin, Coelred, 716, her sanctity had grown until she had attained a fame which gave her precedence among the latest national saints; a reputation, which was naturally upheld by her royal relatives.

The division of the Mercian See of Lichfield, which took place about 675, is of great value in determining the original bounds of the West Engle Mark. It is admitted that the popular Archbishop of Canterbury, Theodore

T. Grundy, *Lichfield.*

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL (*West Front.*)

of Tarsus, who was engaged for several years in this work of division, was guided by historic foundations in forming the new dioceses. His organization of the vast diocese of Mercia was masterly and laborious; but, upon the succession of Æthelred, it was brought to a successful issue, and the kingdom was divided into five Sees—Leicester, as representing the tribal Mid Engles; Sidnacester, the North Engle; Worcester, the Hwiccas; and Hereford, the Hecannas; thus leaving Lichfield, as representing the original land of the Men of the Mark—with such extensions as, during a century, had been made by clearances in the adjacent forests and other causes. The cathedral church of St. Chad of Lichfield, is not only the mother of all Midland churches, but, historically, a monument perpetuating the great change from Pagan worship.

CANNOCK CHASE.

"Good Saint Chad,"

THE APOSTLE OF THE MERCIANS.

THE country of the Mercians, lying about the Trent, and comprising, for the most part, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, and Warwickshire, remained in heathenism until beyond the middle of the seventh century. Doubtless there were, here and there, small companies of Christians massed together for mutual protection against their Pagan enemies, as we know there were elsewhere in various parts of Britain, and probably one of these little communities may have settled in the fertile Staffordshire valley wherein the city of Lichfield was afterwards planted. If so, this may afford ground for the tradition that in early times a considerable number of adherents of the new faith were put to death on this site during the Diocletian persecution (in which Alban suffered martyrdom at Verulam), and that this circumstance gave rise to the name of this site, Lichfield—the field of the dead, or "dead men's plot." Both the story and the derivation are hinted at in the emblem adopted as the corporate seal of the city.

At the darkest hour of Mercian heathenism, however, the light dawned in a most unexpected manner. Peada, the son of the Pagan King, Penda of Mercia, became a suitor for the hand of the daughter of Oswy, King of Northumbria, and the condition made by Oswy of Peada's acceptance was that he should embrace Christianity, and induce his people to do likewise. Peada readily accepted the King's conditions, and was instructed by Alchfrid, the son of Oswy, in the new faith.

In those early days the real life and energy of British Christianity were centred in the north, and the Northumbrian Christians looked not to Rome for their religious centre, but to Ireland. From the sister isle missionaries came over in great numbers to wander into the wildest parts of heathen England; and to the Irish monasteries the northern converts journeyed in

ST. CHAD'S WELL.

order to benefit by a residence in the great centres of learning and piety in that island. Among those who went thither for this purpose were four brothers, natives of Northumbria, Cedda (or Cedd), Ceadda (or Chad), Cynibill, and Caelin, and these, after living some time in Ireland, all became priests and returned to labour in their native country. The newly-converted Mercian prince induced the second of these brothers, Chad, to accompany him, with three other priests—Adda, Betti, and Diuma—on his homeward journey, and to aid him in his labours for the conversion of Mercia. Peada had been admitted by Penda, his father, to a share in the government of a province of his kingdom, and no objection seems to have been raised by the heathen King to his son's Christianizing efforts. Moreover, Peada was destined very soon to exercise independent lordship over a portion of the kingdom of Mercia, for, in the autumn of 655, Penda was overthrown in the last assault upon Christian Northumbria, in a battle fought at Wingfield, near Leeds; and Peada became lord of Mercia, an over-lordship being exercised throughout his territory by Oswy, King of Northumbria. Thereupon Peada created Diuma bishop of the whole Mercian district, acting as a wandering missionary, and having no fixed seat, although for a short period he governed his see from the monastery of Repton, which has been styled "The Westminster Abbey of Mercia."

We need not here refer minutely to the three successors of Diuma, in the See of Mercia, further than to record their names. Diuma was succeeded, in 658, by Ceollach, who abandoned his see after the successful revolt of the Mercians against the over-lordship of Northumbria in 659. His successor was Trumhere, who died in 662, and was followed by Jaruman, who is reckoned by some authorities as the first Bishop of Lichfield. Within the brief space of time covered by the episcopate of these four bishops, the first Christian lord of Mercia had been succeeded by his brother, Wulrhere, also an adherent of the new faith, Peada having been assassinated in or about the year 660.

In recording Chad's first mission work in Mercia, mention should be made of the traditionary story of the conversion and murder of Wulfhere's two sons, Wulfade and Ruffinè.

The version of the legend, as given in 1686 by Plot, upon the authority of John Ross, of Warwick and of Dugdale,* is to the effect that Chad, coming first to Staffordshire, in a secret place, where he lived upon the milk of a doe, which being hunted by Wulfade, son of Wulfhere the King, brought him to the cell of the Saint, who first converted him to the Christian faith, and his brother Ruffiné after. That the cell, by a spring side at Stowe, near Lichfield, being too remote from Wulferecester, they entreated the holy man to remove nearer, "to which," says Plot, "I find S. Ceadda readily complied, and came to another secret place not far off them. Whether under pretence of hunting to avoid their father's anger, who was yet a Pagan, they constantly came to him, and were instructed accordingly, but being observed by one Werebod, one of their father's evil counsellors who came from Wulferecester, and finding them at their devotions, in the midst of his wrath, slew them both—one at Stone, where a church, being erected over the place of their martyrdom, gave both name and original to that town, and the other at Burston, where a chapel was also erected. That S. Ceadd, having fled back to Lichfield, the King was struck with remorse, and repaired to him, was converted, and banished idolatrous worship from his dominions, and in 667 upon the death of Bishop Jarumannus appointed him to the See."

Another version in Cox's "Catalogue of the Monuments of Lichfield Cathedral," says that Wulfade and Ruffiné, the sons of Wulfhere, were murdered at the cell of St. Chad by a Pagan relative, c. 658. Hence they were honoured on the day of their death, viz.: July 24, and adds that the death-place has been erroneously printed at Stone instead of Stove (Stowe).

Still another version gives Eccleshall as the place of St. Chad's altar within a Christian church, formerly a Roman Temple, that Wulfhere was absent at his castle at Uttoxeter; but at the instigation of a woman named Werebode, hastened to Eccleshall, and slew both his sons with his own hand.

Whether the story which connects Wulfhere with the murder of his two sons be true or not, it seems certain that he ultimately embraced Christianity.

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* "Monasticon," vol. 2, p. 122.

We must now return to Chad. How long the zealous young missionary remained in Mercia is uncertain, but, in 664, he was called to be Abbot of Lastingham, in Yorkshire, his brother, Cedd—the late Abbot—having died there in that year. From this seclusion, he was recalled in 666, or 667, to the bishopric of Northumbria, the seat of which was at York. On the death of Tuda, the former bishop, Wilfrid had been appointed to this See, but as the new bishop had tarried a long time in Gaul (whither he had gone in order to receive consecration at the hands of a Roman Bishop), King Oswy became impatient, and appointed Chad to the bishopric, sending him to Deusdedit, the Roman Archbishop of Canterbury, to receive ordination. On arriving in Kent, they found that Archbishop Deusdedit was dead, and were compelled to journey into Wessex, in order that Chad might receive ordination at the hands of Wini, the British Bishop of Winchester. "Chad being thus consecrated bishop," says Bede, in his Ecclesiastical History, "began immediately to devote himself to ecclesiastical truth and to chastity; to apply himself to humility, continence, and study; to travel about, not on horseback, but after the manner of the Apostles, on foot, to preach the gospel in towns, the open country, villages, and castles; for he was one of the disciples of Aidan, and endeavoured to instruct his people by the same actions and behaviour, according to his and his brother Cedd's example."

Now at this time a fierce controversy was being waged as to the validity of British orders, that is to say, ordination conferred by bishops who had derived their authority from the Northern or Celtic Church. The Roman Church, established by Augustine, had hitherto made no headway outside the Kentish diocese which that prelate had founded; while the northern, or distinctively British Church, had, as we have seen, extended its influence throughout the kingdom of Mercia, and had sent one of its bishops to rule over the diocese of Winchester. In order to win over the British Church to Roman authority therefore, Theodore of Tarsus, a man of great tact and judgment, was sent from Rome to the vacant see of Canterbury, and his arrival in this country seems to have synchronised with the return of Wilfrid to the see of York, to find another bishop installed in his place. A dispute arose as to the validity of Chad's ordination, and at a word from Theodore, Chad, who was one of the most humble-minded of men, was induced to return to the seclusion of his monastery, in the wilds of the Cleveland district.

An interesting picture is given by Bede, in his history, of Chad's life in this remote spot. As had been his practice during his brief occupancy of the see of York, he wandered about the wild moorlands surrounding the Abbey, reading, meditating, or teaching; and "if it happened that there blew a strong gust of wind, when he was reading or doing any other thing, he immediately called upon God for mercy, and begged it might be extended to all mankind. If the wind grew stronger, he closed his book, and prostrating himself on the ground, prayed still more earnestly. But if it proved a violent storm of wind or rain, or else that the earth and air were filled with thunder and lightning, he would repair to the church and devote himself to prayers and repeating of psalms, till the weather became calm."*

The willingness of Chad to retire from the see of York in favour of Wilfrid was probably the primary cause of his subsequent appointment to be bishop of Mercia. At any rate, it was at the suggestion of Wilfrid that Wulfhere, King of Mercia, offered his bishopric to the noble-hearted Northumbrian, after the death of Jaruman. Chad was therefore again recalled from his moorland home at Lastingham, and was formally ordained—or his former ordination was ratified—by the Roman archbishop of Canterbury; and he fixed his head-quarters at Lichfield, perhaps being moved to such a choice by the remembrance of the consecration which this site had received by the blood of the martyrs of Diocletan's persecution. The spot was well chosen; it was pleasantly wooded and fertile, and not far removed from the junction of the Watling and Ikeneld Streets, the great arteries of communication with the outer world. He took up his abode near a wood at the eastern extremity of the city, as we now know it, near Stowe Pool. Here he set up his oratory, wherein, says Bede, "he was wont to pray and read with seven or eight of the brethren, as often as he had any spare time from the labour and ministry of the word." But his was no recluse life. He journeyed on foot up and down his extensive diocese, along the old Roman road, he and his little band, sometimes chanting psalms as they went, preaching in remote villages, and setting up the cross in place of the old Druidic sanctuaries, and returning to his sylvan oratory to join with his brethren in prayer and praise. So zealous was he in his Master's cause that, although the Archbishop Theodore himself besought him to spare himself, and to ride about his diocese, instead of wearying himself with his continual journeyings on foot, he forbore to avail himself of this indulgence until the Archbishop provided him with a horse, and with his own hands lifted him into the saddle.

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* Ecclesiastical History, p. 177, *Bohn's Edition.*

But his labours in the new diocese were of brief duration. Within two years and a half of his consecration, the saintly bishop passed away. One of his companions named Owin, who had been prime minister of Queen Etheldred, but had chosen to cast in his lot with Chad, first at Lastingham, and afterwards at Lichfield, was at work in the fields near Stowe, a week before Chad's death, when, Bede tells us, "on a sudden he heard the voice of persons singing most sweetly, and rejoicing, and appearing to descend from heaven." The sweet sounds drew him onward, until he came to the bishop's oratory, and, as he entered, the place seemed filled with the divine melody. Chad enjoined him to repair at once to the church (whither himself also went), and to take with him the seven brothers of the oratory. When they were come into the church the bishop delivered to them his last injunctions to observe discipline and maintain peace among themselves, and foretold that within seven days after having heard the angelic music he would pass away. About the same time, one of Chad's old companions in Ireland received mysterious intimation of his friend's approaching dissolution, in like manner as Owin had in the fields at Lichfield. This was Father Egbert, who, in referring to the circumstance in after years, in a conversation with Hygbald, Abbot of Lindsey, said, "I know a man in this island, still in the flesh, [referring, as Bede supposes, to himself], who, when that prelate [Chad] passed out of this world, saw the soul of his brother Cedd, with a company of angels, descending from heaven, who, having taken his soul along with them, returned thither again."

Chad's foreboding was verified, and on the 2nd of March, 673, he passed away. He was buried at Stowe, and a wooden shrine, "made like a little house, covered, having a hole in the wall," was built over his remains; and to this shrine thousands of devotees made pilgrimages, counting themselves happy if they could but thrust their hands through the hole in the wall, and take thence a handful of the dust which had covered the remains of the saintly bishop, which was deemed to be efficacious in restoring the sick, whether man or beast, to health. A legend tells how once a lunatic who, by accident, had escaped from his keepers, rested a night upon the tomb of the saint, and in the morning was found to have been healed of his malady, "sitting clothed, and in his right mind."

ST. CHAD'S, STOWE, LICHFIELD.

Over the site of Chad's oratory, a church was built and dedicated to his memory, the pretty church of Stowe. His bones were removed to the Cathedral church, where his shrine was afterwards set up, but they were carried away by a prebendary, named Arthur Dudley, at the Reformation, and, having been taken hither and thither, they found a final resting-place, it is said, in the Roman Catholic cathedral of St. Chad at Birmingham.

The pilgrimages which were made to the shrine of St. Chad, (one of the favourite objects of the earlier mediæval pilgrims,) may be said to have laid the foundation for the growth and prosperity of the city of Lichfield, and the history of this diocese may, in reality, be said to date from the episcopate of "Good Saint Chad."

LICHFIELD IN THE LAST CENTURY.

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THE CLOISTER, REPTON ABBEY.

Guthlac, Prince and Hermit.

THE beautiful story of Guthlac, the youthful prince of Mercia, whose saintly life in the solitude of the Fen Country made famous the site of the future Abbey of Crowland, is one which cannot be omitted from any record of the worthies of Staffordshire.

Guthlac was the son of Penwald, who was a man holding high position in Mid-England, as being near to the throne itself, and descended from the same stock as the lords of Mercia. Guthlac was probably born a year or two before Æthelred began to reign over Mercia: that is, about the year 673, and would seem to have come under softening and refining influences, which, although over-borne for a time by the high spirits of youth and early manhood, bore fruit in his final choice of a religious life. Legend tells how a sign from heaven heralded his birth, and the name given him in baptism, although primarily of a tribal origin (from the Guthlacingas), seems also to have had a prophetic signification, its meaning being "the reward of battle." His life, during the years of his early manhood, partook of the barbaric spirit of the age in which he lived. He took part in all the savage frays of the time. When he was fifteen years old, he gathered around him a band of his fellow-nobles, and for the ensuing nine years he joined with them in avenging private feuds, sacking and burning homesteads and villages, and in carrying off booty from their foes. But even while he engaged in this barbaric sport his conscience seems to have troubled him, and it is said that he was always prompted by the inward monitor to give back a portion of the spoil to those whom he and his companions had plundered.

At the age of twenty-four, the influence of his early training made itself felt in a remarkable manner. "Suddenly," says Green, "as he lay sleepless in the forest among his sleeping war-band, there rose before him the thought of his crimes, and of the doom that waited on him. Such thoughts were stirred in many hearts no doubt by the new Christian faith; but in none did they find a quicker answer. The birds waking with the dawn, only roused his comrades to hear Guthlac's farewell." He repaired speedily to the Abbey of Repton, near Burton, the great religious house of Mercia, and the burying-place of her kings, and there, divesting himself of the long hair which betokened the noble, he became a tonsured monk.

In the year 704, Æthelred gave up his crown for the cloister. After a short reign of five years, his nephew and successor, King Cenred, followed his example. These events occurred after Guthlac had passed his thirtieth year, and with the religious zeal of the females of the royal house, he may naturally have been greatly influenced. King Cenred was succeeded by Coelred, a son of Ethelred, a man of very different stamp. He held the monks in contempt, and made war whenever opportunity served. He died in 716, according to monkish traditions, in delirium and blasphemy; but this is generally understood to mean that he was poisoned by them.

After a season spent by Guthlac in studying the sacred books at Repton, and more especially in reading and hearing stories of the lives of hermit saints and others, who had given themselves up to a life of contemplation and religious service, he resolved himself to live the eremite life. Casting about him for some solitude in whch he could carry his resolve into effect, he fixed upon "the most desolate region in Britain—the vast fen that formed a no-man's land, between Mercia and East Anglia." * Here, guided by a man named Tatwine, he found a lonely isle in the fenny swamp, the place afterwards known as Crowland. Here he took up his abode, with two servants to help him in obtaining a living out of the marshy soil; his simple

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* Dict. Nat. Biog. xxiii., 373.

fare, barley-bread and water, his garment of skins, and his home, a hut on the side of an old grave-mound, reputed to be haunted. For a season it seemed as though the saint himself were haunted too, for we are told he was continually tormented by visions of demons. At length there came a release from these fierce temptations—which may have taken the form of longings after the old wild life—and he found peace in his hermit cell, an outward and visible sign of which was manifested by the friendship of bird and beast. We are told that the former became so tame with him that they would hover about him, and perch unhindered on shoulder and knee, and rested in the thatch that covered his cell.

The fame of Guthlac's holy life spread far and wide, and he had visitors from far and near. Hedda, the eighth Bishop of Lichfield, came to him from his Mercian home. The Abbot, Wilfrith, also came hither, bringing with him Æthelbald, the great-nephew of Penda, who had been driven into exile by Ceolred, King of Mercia, and he took refuge with the hermit in his lonely isle, receiving from him great comfort and consolation, with assurances that the day would yet come when the exile of Crowland should rule over his people, and be victorious over his enemies. Thus encouraged, Æthelbald, says Ingulph, in his Chronicle of Crowland, "was so much refreshed in spirit that, without delay, in presence of his father, Guthlac, and the other persons then standing by, that which he conceived in his heart to do, he pronounced with his lips, and declared that as soon as it should be his lot peacefully to arrive at the helm of state, he would found in that same spot a monastery of religion to the praise of God, and in memory of his said father, Guthlac."

Guthlac continued to dwell in his hut at Crowland fifteen years, at the end of which period he fell ill on the Wednesday before Easter, A.D. 714; and finding that his end drew nigh he gave instructions that he should be buried by the hand of his sister Pege, in a linen winding-sheet, and a leaden coffin, which had been sent to him by Ecburh, the Abbess of Repton, and he died on the Wednesday in Easter week. Æthelbald was still an exile, but when he heard of the death of Guthlac, he hastened to Crowland. Here, while dwelling in an adjoining cottage to that which had been occupied by the hermit, mourning the loss of his spiritual father and adviser, Guthlac appeared to him in a vision, and foretold that "before the year should have run its course, he should gain the sceptre of his kingdom, and should in happiness enjoy a lengthened course of days."

Guthlac's bones were laid at rest in a shrine within the little church, which he had raised on the fen-girt island; and Æthelbald, became King, as the Saint had foretold. After a long and prosperous rule, the career of Æthelbald ended, as it appears to have begun, on the eastern boundary of Staffordshire, and his body lies at Repton.

EARLY CHURCH DOOR, TUTBURY.

TAMWORTH CASTLE IN THE LAST CENTURY.

Offa and Drida.

WITH the single exception of that of Alfred the Great, the name of Offa stands out amid the records of the Anglo-Saxon rulers of England more prominently than any other, and although his origin, and much even of his career, is shrouded in mystery, his valour and daring, his energetic and enterprising efforts for the defence and development of his kingdom have earned for him an enduring fame.

Under its former rulers, Mercia had grown from the smallest and weakest of kingdoms to the greatest and strongest. Each of its greatest rulers had by conquest extended its bounds, until the impotency of old age had brought defeat and left the kingdom at the mercy of its rivals.

The reigns of Penda, of his sons Wulfhere and Æthelred, and of his grandson Ceolred, had each a somewhat similar ending. The latter survived defeat from the King of Wessex but one year, and was buried at Lichfield, 716.

Æthelbald, his successor, the grandson of a brother of Penda, was brought from the seclusion of Croyland to the throne, and after a comparatively peaceful reign of forty years, he, in 752, suffered defeat at Burford, Oxfordshire, and retired to the heart of the original Mercland. For a brief period he continued fighting for his kingdom, and was slain in battle, or in a night revolt at Seckington on the Warwickshire border, near Tamworth. The reports of this engagement are very contradictory, they agree only in that he was treacherously killed by a Mercian Ealdorman, one Beornred, who set himself up as ruler, and the slain king was laid in the Abbey of Repton. The revolt, however, was not a popular one, and Offa, the grandson of Eanwulf a cousin of Æthelbald was chosen King.

Nine generations before Offa, in that line which leads backwards to the inevitable origin of Saxon kings, the mythical Woden, tradition tells us of another Offa, the son of King Waermund. He was dumb and blind in his youth, and in danger of losing his throne, but miraculously recovered his sight and his speech, became wise and valiant, thus was he enabled to triumph over his enemies.

Tradition again relates that when Æthelbald fell at Seckington, and his throne was seized by the traitor Beornred, a certain ealdorman of the Hwiccas, one Thingforth, a kinsman of the Mercian kings, had an only son, Winfrith, who was lame, blind, and dumb, and Beornred sought Thingforth and others of the royal stock to kill them; that Thingforth fled, leaving behind him his blind, helpless son, Winfrith, and God had pity on him. He opened his eyes, and saw; stretched forth his limbs, and walked; essayed to speak, and spake; his ears were opened, and he heard; he waxed strong, and became mighty and valiant. The wise men called him no longer Winfrith, but Offa, and made him their leader. He went forth and slew Beornred, and, it is needless to say, became king, and ruled wisely, and warred terribly, and smote extensively.

However much of this legend may be rejected it is certain that Offa, the son of Thingforth, was called to the throne, and became a great ruler.

The early years of Offa's rule were defensive rather than aggressive; nor does he come into prominence until after his marriage with the beautiful Drida, a relative of the great French King, Charlemagne.

The remarkable and oft-told story of Drida is of monkish origin. For some crime committed she underwent the modified punishment of the ordeal by water. Sent adrift on the ocean in a small boat, fate brought her ashore within Offa's territory, presumably on the Dee or the Severn, and she sought the King's presence. Inwardly a fiend, but outwardly an angel, by her beauty she gained his eye; by a false but piteous story she gained his heart, and speedily became his queen;* and whilst she enthralled her husband by the loveliness of her person, she broke the heart of his mother by her pride and cruelty.

Apart from the evil influence of the lovely Drida, the career of Offa is but a repetition of that of his most valiant predecessors. Attacks upon Northumbria, Wessex, and Kent increased his territory and his fame; prolonged contests with the native races, who still vigorously fought west of the Severn for such of the land as was still left to them, ended in the conquest of Shropshire and Hereford, and the creation of the great and lasting barrier known as Offa's Dyke, a vast trench from the Dee to the Wye, a hundred miles in length—the remains whereof are still visible—which formed a rampart that eventually attained the object of a definite Mercian frontier.

All the Mercian kings, as we have seen, maintained a close connection with Staffordshire, and Offa was no exception. With courts in various parts of his kingdom, and necessarily maintaining a stronghold proximate to the Welsh frontier near Hereford, yet, as appears by a charter of 781, he kept his Christmas festivities at his "Regal palace in Tamworth," a place for which he had special regard. That he considered it as his central court, or capital, is manifest from the fact that one of the ambitions of his life was the conversion of the See of the neighbouring city of Lichfield to an Archbishopric. In this great work, notwithstanding the potent opposition of all the great ecclesiastics of the land, he succeeded, and, in 786, the chief Mercian church took equal rank with York and Canterbury, and in an existing charter, the name of Hygbert, the first Archbishop, stands before the primates of those Sees.

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* A Saxon coin, struck by Quindred, Queen of Offa, King of Mercia, A.D. 758, was sold in 1805, by one Holt, a watchmaker of Eastbourne, to Sir Joseph Banks for £6.

C. E. Weale, *Tamworth.*

FROM THE CASTLE HILL, TAMWORTH.

The great blot upon Offa's name and fame occurred seven years later. Æthelbert, the young King of East Anglia came to Offa's court to espouse the Princess Elfleda. His suit, although acceptable to Offa, was distasteful to his Queen, and Æthelbert was foully murdered in the midst of the rejoicings of the court. Offa is alleged to have been innocent of the crime, but he certainly profited by it, inasmuch as he seized the kingdom of the slain King, and thus drew upon himself the stigma that attaches to this act of treachery. In all else he stands out prominently as a pattern of wisdom and greatness. In the regard and friendship of Charlemagne he had a powerful ally. As an English king, a soldier, and a law-giver, he surpassed all who had preceded him; but henceforth this foul deed overshadowed the history of his life, and the remainder of his days were passed in remorse and misery.

The tragedy may have been enacted at any one of Offa's numerous courts, but one near Hereford is usually specified as the scene. The great Abbey of Saint Albans is said to have been founded by him, after a pilgrimage to Rome, in expiation of the crime, but he died before its completion, in 796.

The baneful character of Drida extended, we are told, to at least one of her daughters. Edburga became the queen of Beorhtric of Wessex; her marriage was the result of a base negotiation to expel from Offa's court the young and gifted Prince Egbert, afterwards King of Wessex, the grandfather of Alfred the Great; this was in 787, Egbert had been sometime attached to the court of Offa, at that period undoubtedly at Tamworth; he was driven an exile to the Court of Charlemagne. In 802, Beorhtric was poisoned by Edburga whereupon Egbert first became King of Wessex, and eventually of England.

Offa's son, Egfrid, who had been joined in the kingship with his father, survived him but a few months; Elfleda, the quondam bride of the young Anglian King, fled to the cloisters of Croyland; and her mother, the wicked Drida is said to have been confined by Offa in a lonely fortress; that to obtain possession of vast wealth which she had hoarded, she was eventually murdered by robbers, being tortured, thrown into a well, and allowed to die.

Edburga, Beorhtric's queen, after poisoning her husband passed over to France, became Abbess of a monastery, but was driven out for immorality of life, and eventually ended a miserable existence as a common beggar in the streets of Pavia.

Thus the regal magnificence of kingly pomp changes to the squalor of an immoral mendicity, and a monarch ruling under the halo of a mythical and god-like descent, by a personal bravery, a far-seeing wisdom, and a statecraft of the highest order, advanced to the forefront of European kings, in a brief period is blotted out, his line is extinct; the very place of his burial is forgotten.

LICHFIELD FROM THE SOUTH.

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Ethelfleda's Fortress.

TO the visitor who spends an hour or two in the quiet streets of Tamworth to-day, or gets a passing glimpse of the picturesque old town from the window of a railway carriage, there seems but little in its modern aspect to call to mind the stormy scenes through which it has passed, ere it settled down to its long sleep in the fertile plain watered by the Tame and Anker. Yet, during the earlier years of its history, it was the centre of severe conflict between Saxon and Dane, and the scene of no little pomp and pageant during the years which followed the Norman Conquest.

At what period Tamworth first had an existence it is difficult to determine with accuracy, but its nearness to the great "milky way" of the Romans—the Watling Street—which passes within about a mile of the town, and the fact that the Upper Saltway, from Droitwich to the Lincolnshire coast, passed right across its site,* there seems good reason to believe that there was a settlement of some sort here in Roman times. But even if this were the case, the place was probably of but little importance until after the settlement of the Mercian kingdom, when it became a royal seat, the frequent resort of the Mercian kings. Unlike the other Saxon provinces, Mercia seems to have had no proper capital, and Tamworth, as Mr. J. R. Green says, "was simply a royal vill at which the Mercian kings dwelt more frequently than elsewhere." Its position in the vicinity of the Watling Street, commanding as it did the passage of the waterway at an important point, doubtless first led the Saxon conquerors to make a stronghold of it. Under Offa it was further strengthened by the construction of a vast entrenchment or dyke, encircling the town on the landward side, traces of

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* A lane leading out of Tamworth in the north-western direction retained the name of *Salter's Lane*, until within comparatively recent times.

C. E. Weale, *Tamworth.*

TAMWORTH CASTLE.

which still retain the name of Offa's Dyke; and a palace was built, which was famed for its splendour throughout middle England. Here Offa kept his Christmas festival in 781 and granted gifts to the monks of Worcester, dating the grants "from his seat at the royal palace in Tamworth," and from this time the name of Tamworth appeared frequently in charters granted by the kings of Mercia.

When the pirates of the north began to make their way up the creeks and rivers from the eastern coast, and to harry the Saxon possessors of the land, these invaders speedily found their way up the Trent, and took up their quarters at Repton. From thence they marched forth through the whole Midland district, and among other places Tamworth fell into their hands, and was destroyed with its palace. It lay in ruins until Ethelfleda, the daughter of Alfred, restored and fortified it in 913 as one of a series of defences commanding the Watling Street road. On the rising ground, which overlooked the confluence of the Tame and the Anker, she threw up a huge mound, and crowned it with a fortress. This was the beginning of Tamworth Castle, and although little of the original building now remains above ground, the artificial mound, ditches, and embankments, and the massive curtain-wall across the dry ditch of the keep (now forming the path up to the castle) still exist, and the latter is regarded with deep interest by students of the history of architecture, as a fine example of the herring-bone masonry in existence before the Norman Conquest.

Ethelfleda having, "by the help of God," built her stronghold, made it her chief home for the remainder of her eventful life. As the one conspicuous copy of her father, the great and noble Alfred, as the last Queen of Mercia, the daring defender of its people, her memory is still deservedly held dear, and the links which connect her with our county claim a prominence in local history.

Not only had Alfred married a Mercian wife, but his sister Elswitha was the wife of Burhred, the Mercian King, who, after twenty years of war with the Danish host, was finally driven from his kingdom. Alfred ascended the throne at a period of almost hopeless disaster. During his temporary hiding in Athelney, he was accompanied by his wife and his sister, the

Mercian Queen. The romantic events attending this enforced retirement, his speedy return to activity, his disguised visit to the Danish camp, and his subsequent victory over, and his noble treatment of, the foe, need no repetition; the outcome of the whole was the treaty of 878, known as the treaty of Wedmore.

W. H. Horne, *Leek.*

HEN CLOUD FROM THE SWYTHAMLEY ROCHES.

This treaty was of great importance to Mercia, and particularly to Staffordshire—a district which may now be called by this name—as the division of Mercia into shires is said to have been effected during the Danish occupation in 876. To the Danish chief—Guthorm—was apportioned the land east and north of Watling Street. That this boundary followed the course of the Roman way to Chester is not clear; such a division would have given the Danes the greater part of our county, but, if we may judge by the survival of place-names, such an occupation by them was at most of a temporary character.

The western Mercians were at this period led by the valiant Ethelred, an ealdorman and noble of the Hwiccas; his services were of great value to Alfred, who rewarded him with the hand of his illustrious daughter, Ethelfleda, and made him vice-king of the remnant of Mercia.

The Treaty of Wedmore was rejected by many of the Danes, and fighting was speedily resumed. With a boundary, which neither side respected, passing through the heart of the shire, the state of its inhabitants was a pitiable one. The rapid marches of the Danes, from London to their stronghold near Bridgenorth, were frequent, yet the Mercians steadily advanced, and the capture of Chester in 895, shows that they had gone northward to the valleys of the Churnet and the Dane, had penetrated the forest boundary of Lyme, and passed the mountainous Roches of Swythamley, and probably the whole shire had by that time passed under the sway of Ethelred and Ethelfleda.

Not, however, until 910, when Alfred had been dead nine years, were the Danes finally driven away. How steadily Ethelfleda and her husband had been acquiring fame is attested by the remarkable accord of all the chronicles of the time. In her wonderful career she had withdrawn herself from all domestic life, and given herself up entirely to the defence of her country. Every glowing term of admiration is accorded her. Even the title of Queen was thought inadequate, and she became known as the King of Mercia.

The defence of a boundary reaching from London far away towards Chester, against a merciless, crafty, and energetic foe, was a task of great magnitude and involved a constant strife, carried on for thirty years. But the efforts of Ethelfleda, and her people were at length rewarded by the establishment of her kingdom on a firm basis.

Various, and somewhat conflicting, are the records of the bloody battles which, in 910, were fought near Wolverhampton. "In this year," says the

Anglo-Saxon chronicle, "the Angles and the Danes fought at Teottenhale, on the eighth before the Ides of August,* and the Angles gained the victory."

According to Fabius Ethelwerd, and other authorities, this battle was fought in the plain of Wodensfield, the Danes returning with the rich spoils of a raid in the west were there met by the Mercians and West Saxons. A battle ensued, and the English obtained the victory, the 5th of August being given as the date. The engagement at Wednesfield, however, was a second battle, fought in the following year, the Danes coming from the north to avenge the first defeat, and in this battle three Danish kings, or chiefs, were killed, and as supporting this it may be pointed out that the lows or burial places of great warriors are found both at Wrottesley and Wednesfield.

The following year Ethelfleda became a widow; thenceforth she bore solely the rule and right lordship over the Mercians, to the admiration of the English and the fear of her foes; not alone as a warrior on the field was she pre-eminent; as a military engineer she became equally famous. Chester she rebuilt in 907, and in each year was some castle built or town fortified—Bridgenorth and Scargate in 912,—and in 913 she went with all the Mercians to Tamworth, and there built the fortress early in the summer, and after this, before Lammas, that at Stafford, and in the next year that at Wednesbury early in the summer, and afterwards in the same year, late in harvest, that at Warwick.

Of these three Staffordshire fortresses, all traces of those at Wednesbury and Stafford are lost. Previous to the building of Ethelfleda's stronghold, the site of our county town is said to have been the retreat of the princely recluse, Berthelin, a disciple of St. Guthlac, and to have borne the name of Betheney. The castle at Stafford, which formerly occupied the site of the present castle, was of Norman and not of Saxon origin.

Whilst the early kings of Mercia had no fixed centre of government or capital, it is yet certain that the royal vill or burh of Tamworth was more frequently than any other their place of abode, and Ethelfleda but followed her predecessors in making this commanding position her chief home; and although Gloucester (probably the early abode of her husband) was much favoured by her—and there she founded a monastery, and there was buried —yet to her stronghold at Tamworth would she return from every arduous

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* Eight days before the 13th of August.

D. Bordley, Stafford.

STAFFORD CASTLE.

exploit. To Ethelfleda, by direction of King Alfred, was confided the education and training of her nephew Athelstan and much of his early manhood, whilst learning the art of war, would be passed at Tamworth, and some important incidents of his after life are associated with the place.

Ethelfleda too much resembled her renowned sire not to have been bountiful and great in all her actions; regal in her life, and skilful in her creations, her royal burh of Tamworth must have speedily attained considerable importance, and in the last years of her life she may have derived great help from Athelstan in the series of brilliant achievements which have given a lustre to her name. She defeated the Welsh under Prince Owen; captured the Danish stronghold of Derby in 917, and Leicester, 918. York was also on the point of yielding to her power when she died at her home at Tamworth, according to the Mercian Chronicle, twelve days before Midsummer, 918; but, according to the Chronicle of Winchester, 922.

With her death the chequered history of Mercia as a kingdom was brought to a close, but there is nothing inglorious in the ending. The bravery, characteristic of its greatest kings, was sustained, and, victorious and conquering, its people became united with the greater and wider kingdom she had helped to build up.

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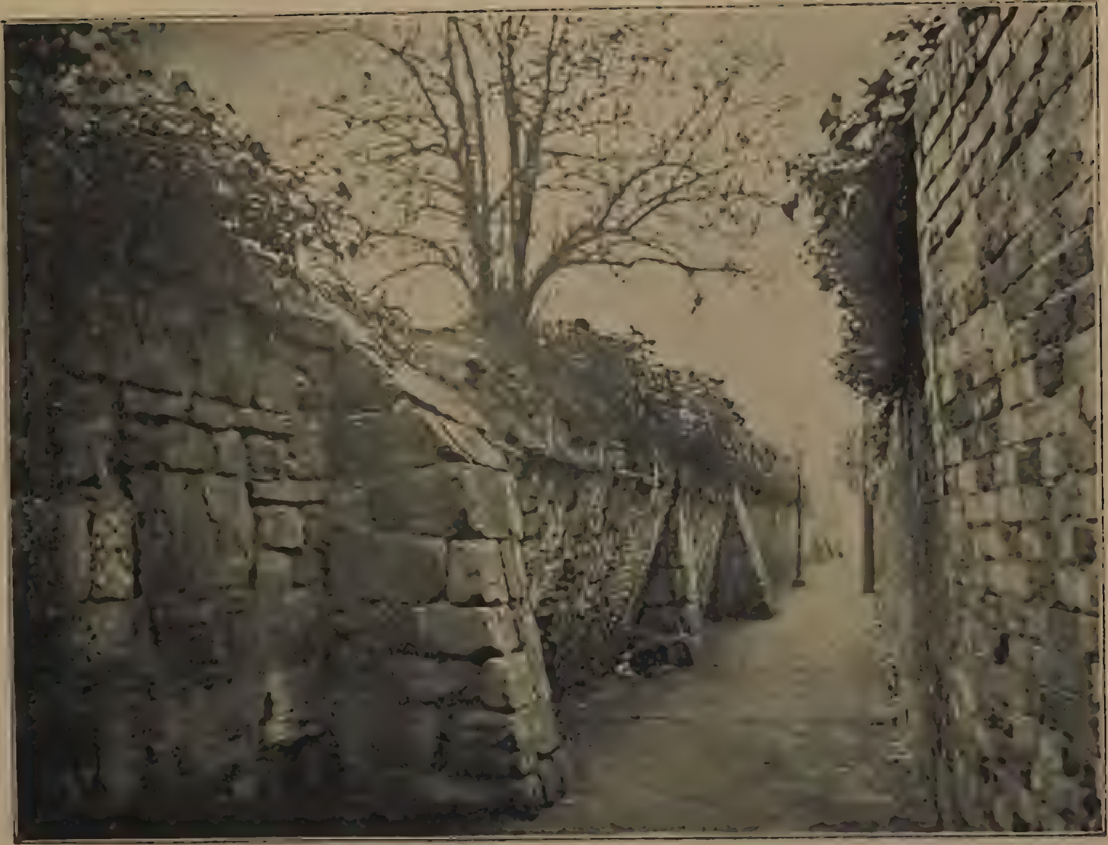

Burton-on-Trent.

[illegible] BURTON ABBEY.

BURTON IN THE LAST CENTURY.

Earl Wulfric's Abbey.

THE traveller whose impression of Burton-on-Trent is derived from the pyramidal piles of barrels which, battalion-like, flank the wide expanding line of railway in its vicinity—from the lofty store-houses and towering chimneys, whose smoke-wreaths darken the air,—may deem the Town of Breweries the last place in which he would expect to find anything of archæological interest. Yet, but for the suppression of its wealthy and ancient abbey by Henry VIII., in 1540, Burton-on-Trent might to-day have been under the control of a powerful abbot, and a retinue of Benedictines; instead of the great breweries and warehouses it might have boasted many noble ecclesiastical buildings and scholastic foundations; perhaps, who knows? the jolly old Benedictines might have found out the secret (if, indeed, they did not,) which has made Burton beer famous all the world over, and the abbey of Burton might have enjoyed a reputation similar to that gained by certain foreign monasteries in the present day, and the Benedictine Pale Ales of Burton Abbey might have achieved celebrity instead of those of Bass and Allsopp.

For more than eight centuries the history of Burton—or Byreton-supra-Trent—was, for the most part, that of the religious foundations of Modwen, or Wulfric Spot, and it is difficult to understand how the place escaped being called Modwensbury, or Modwenstow, unless, indeed, its Saxon in-dwellers, with a prescience of its future fame, foresaw in the name of Byre, or Bere-town, a fitting appellation for the town of beer.

The story of Modwen is differently told by various chroniclers. Two slightly varying versions of her history place her in the ninth century, and tell how she came from Ireland into England, having miraculously healed the king's son of his leprosy, and was afterwards entrusted with the religious training of Edith, and founded the Abbey of Polesworth. In one of these versions it is Egbert's son, Arnulph, whom she restores to health; in the other it is Ethelwulf's son, Alfred (our Alfred the Great), who is cured, Edith being entrusted to the saintly Modwen's care, by her brother, Ethelwulf, instead of by her father, Egbert. Another account fixes the seventh century as the period in which Modwen lived, and in this version, Egfrith of Northumbria (670-685) is the king mentioned, and Alfrid, or Ælfrith, the son of Oswin, the king's brother, is the miraculously-restored prince, while his sister Elfleda is the recluse instructed by Modwen. In this case - and this is the more probable version of the story—the Edith of Polesworth (the St. Editha to whom Tamworth Church is dedicated), who died in 904, lived nearly two centuries later than Modwen's period.

As to the close of Modwen's life the various accounts, for the most part, agree. It is said that she died in Scotland at the age of 130 years, and her body was brought for burial to Andressey, an island of the Trent at Burton, where stood the religious house she had founded, and her remains were subsequently removed to the abbey founded by Wulfric Spot. The epitaph from her tomb has been preserved by Camden :—

Ireland gave Modwen birth England a grave ;
As Scotland death, and God her soul shall save,
The first land life, the second death did give,
The third in earth, her earthly part receive,
Lanfortin takes, whom Connel's country owns,
And happy Burton holds the Virgin's bones.

Thus, shortly after the founding of Repton, a community existed midway between that place and the home of the Kings at Tamworth. But Burton has a claim to a still greater antiquity, lying immediately upon the Roman Ikeneld Way leading to York, and upon or near adjacent to the Via Devana, from Leicester, through Chesterton-under-Lyme, to Chester. Such discoveries of Roman and British remains have from time to time been made, as leave little doubt of a very early occupation, near the site of the present town, which in those days was to a great extent covered by the waters of the Trent.

Upon one of the islands formed by the wide spreading waters opposite the Church of Burton, Modwen fixed her cell, probably about the close of the seventh century. Its name of Andressey long survived in St. Andrew's Isle, and, until recent times, one spot retained the name of Mudwins-hole; and Plot speaks of a well of holy repute in this locality, as St. Modwen's Well. Whether Modwen's Cell survived the long years of Danish occupation and irruption we have no authoritative record. A dawning reverence for religion may have preserved it from their fury, or it may have been blotted out of existence, but if so its memory remained, and the dawn of the eleventh century saw a new and more important edifice raised to her honour and saintly memory.

In the years 1002-1004, Wulfric Spot, the Ældorman or Earl of Mercia, with a munificence which, even in those days of regal bounty, claims our wonder and admiration, founded the great Abbey of Burton, and endowed it with estates not only in Staffordshire, but in adjacent and more remote counties.

That Wulfric—the founder of the Abbey, the near relative of King Ethelred—and Ælfric, the son and successor of Ælfere (one of the earliest Mercian Earls, who died in 983) were one and the same, all chroniclers agree. Further than this, research as to his personality does not enhance our respect for the early historic records, which are even less reliable with respect to Earl Wulfric than to other Mercian nobles. By one authority, he is made the father of Leofric,* but this cannot be true, although he was undoubtedly a relative of that earl. By some chroniclers he is branded as a traitor to his king, whilst others suggest that if he was not a traitor he had ample excuse for being one. The splendid services which he and his father had rendered to their country did not shield Wulfric from the vile treatment which he received at the hands of Ethelred.

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* "Diocesan History of Lichfield."

In 1004, two years after the founding of the Abbey, Wulfric obtained from the King a charter of confirmation, and this, together with the founder's will, is still preserved, and has been frequently printed. In the last-named document there are phrases and statements which are utterly at variance with the aspersions cast by some of the earlier chroniclers on the character of Wulfric.

The estates disposed of by Wulfric illustrate the magnitude of the possessions held by a Saxon Thane. In Staffordshire alone, besides the land "where the minster stands," and "the minster which I have built," the Abbey lands in Burton were at the end of that century described as comprising a hide and a half (between 150 and 180 acres), and the will enumerates lands in twenty-six townships in the county, some containing three, four, and even eight hides, and these comprised but a fourth of the whole. The land given to members of his family lay around Burton—thus Rolleston, Hurlaston, and Murchington lands passed to his sons, Alfhelm and Wulfage. The lands at Elford and Oakley, "to my poor daughter," and afterwards "to the Convent of Byrtun, because it was my grandfather's gift, and I will that Alfhelm be guardian of herself and the land," whilst the land at Stretton, and "the brooch that was her grandmother's," was left to his god-daughter, the daughter of Morcar and Eadgyth. To the brotherhood at Tamwyrth, Wulfric gave "the land at Laudun, all as they before released it to me and let them have half the rent thereof, and the monks of Byrtun half both of meat, and of men, and of stock, and of all things."

Longdon, near Lichfield, is two miles from the ancient fort at Beaudesert, and a little more from Bromley, afterwards the home of Earl Leofric. This devise would point to Longdon as the home of Wulfric, and that he was a member of the Brotherhood or Gild of Tamworth, one of the earliest of these Anglo-Saxon fraternities recorded, although England is said to be the birthplace of Gilds, and its existence is very striking testimony to the distinctive position of the royal burg in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Wulfric made his brother Ælfhelm and Archbishop Ælfric the guardians of his will, which was made in 1004. The minster was already built, and a monastery and a convent are spoken of as founded, and the date, 1002, is always given as the year of the foundation. This was the year of the vaguely recorded treacherous massacre of the Danes, which is said to have originated at Murchington, and it is plausibly suggested that Wulfric founded the Abbey in remorse for the part he played in this act of villainy.* The

R. Keene, *Burton-on-Trent.*

BURTON ABBEY.

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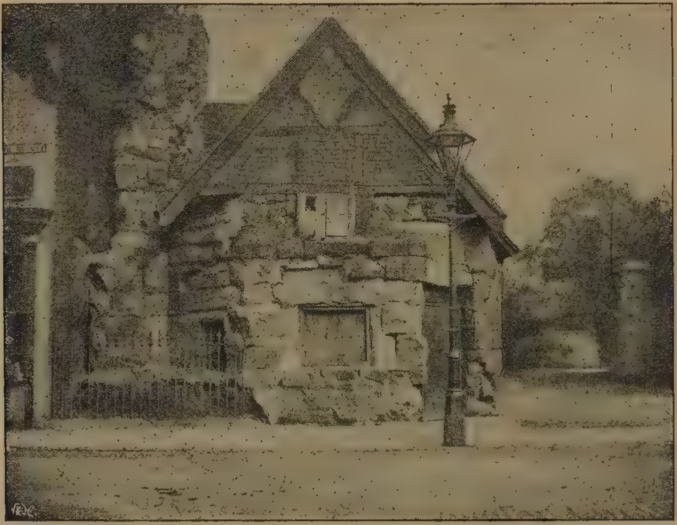
* *Midland Antiquary*, Vol. iv., p. 97.

Shoreditch Public Libraries.

responsible author of the massacre, however, was Wulfric's bitter enemy, the base Edric Streon, who ousted him from the Earldom, married the King's daughter, murdered both Alfhelm and Morcar, and was probably instrumental in the blinding of Wulfric's two grandsons.



THE PORTER'S LODGE, BURTON ABBEY.

The treatment of Wulfric by the weak, indolent, but withal revengeful, King Ethelred ill accords with the concluding language of the will: "mine own lordly king, so good and gentle-hearted." And equally puzzling is the statement of our historians, that after being deprived of the rule of Mercia, after the maiming and killing of those near and dear to him, he is still found fighting for his king and country, and that in 1010 he fell in battle at Ipswich.

The history of the Abbey, until extinguished in the general dissolution of 1540, is full of interest. For five centuries its abbots were lords and rulers of the town, and controlled their forest of Bromley, where they kept a forester. Although not mitred they were often called to Parliament. The possessions of the abbey were extended far into the northern counties; it was favoured with several Papal Bulls and Royal Charters; its buildings were greatly increased; the bridges, buildings, and mills of the town were supported and maintained, and many historic events during its long existence are interwoven with its lasting records.

But in 1540, Wulfric's great foundation shared the fate of other richly endowed religious houses, as well as of the less wealthy guilds and chantries. Their revenues passed to the coffers of bluff King Hal, their lands to his favourite courtiers, and the grand old buildings, the rich memorials of medieval art and piety, were left to fall into decay and ruin.

> "Pillar and roof and pavement all are gone,
> The lamp extinguished, and the prayers long done;
> But faith and awe, as stars, eternal shine—
> The human heart is their enduring shrine."

Leofric of Bromley.

IN the injustice done to the memory of a good and great man, English history has no parallel to that of Earl Leofric, a man of noble lineage and of eminent talents, whose long life was passed without a recorded blot or blemish, and whose death invoked a remarkable concord of adulation, deservedly gained by his piety, bounty, and integrity. Yet, notwithstanding all this, his good fame in the lapse of time has suffered from an idle tale, a silly fiction, created nobody knows how, three centuries after his death.

> The evil which men do lives after them,
> The good is oft interred with their bones,

and legend and poem have painted for us a picture of Leofric as a coarse barbarian, the unjust oppressor of the poor, and a shameless tyrant who forced a degrading task upon his beautiful and loving wife.

The legend of Godiva's ride through the streets of Coventry has again and again been proved to have no particle of foundation. The city's growth was due to the great religious foundation of Leofric in or shortly after 1043. Hitherto the name of Coventry was only known in connection with a nunnery utterly destroyed some years previously. That there were streets to ride through or citizens to oppress previous to that time is more than a mere improbability, whilst judging by the age of her children Godiva had passed her fiftieth year, and beyond doubt had been a grandmother for some years.

During the 14th century, when this story was invented, it was a common custom for burgesses and citizens to obtain from their lords charters granting them freedom from toll in the neighbouring markets. It was not however until the days of Richard II. that the lines,

I, Luryche, for love of thee
Doe make Coventre tol free,

were set up in a window of Trinity Church.

The indelicate story is not peculiar to Coventry. The town of Castle St. Briavels, Gloucestershire, preserves a similar tradition, but that which is told of Coventry has grown, snow-ball like, with the telling.* Originally the ride was said to have been in sight of the people; afterwards, to suit an altered taste, the order for closing doors and windows was added, and eventually in the time of Charles II., to make it perfect, a groom, changing to a Dane or a tailor, was introduced as losing his eyesight for infringing this order. To give force and reality to the story a wooden figure of St. George was set up in a back street to represent the peeping delinquent. The whole story, however, on the slightest investigation is seen to be a glaring imposture.

In vain historians have exposed alike the baseness and the baselessness of the legend of Godiva's ride through Coventry's streets: facts are disregarded by writers of fiction, and since the late laureate has woven the falsehood into alluring language and stamped the legend with his authority, truth has to yield to romance, and it is a sacrilege to doubt a story which has stood for six centuries.

As Earl of Mercia Leofric was the second greatest man in England. After 828 the rulers of Mercia were kings by deputy, but for a century after the death of Ethelfleda the ruling Ældormen were appointed by the King, and although following former customs in their migratory and fleeting mode of life, alternately visiting the Royal Manors throughout their kingdom with a numerous train, this was gradually changing to a more settled mode of life.

In Green's "Conquest of England" we have a vivid description of these progresses: "We see," he says, "the king's forerunners pushing ahead of the train, arriving in haste at the spot destined for the next halt, broaching the beer barrels, setting the board, slaying and cooking the kine, baking the bread; till the long company come pounding in through the muddy roads, horsemen and spearmen, thegn and noble, bishop and clerk, the string of sumpter horses, the big waggons with the royal hoard or the royal wardrobe, and, at last, the heavy standard borne before the king himself. Then follows the rough justice-court, the hasty council, the huge banquet, the fires dying down into the darkness of the night, till a fresh dawn wakes the forerunners to seek a fresh encampment."*

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* As a matter of fact, variants of this myth are to be found in other countries, both eastern and western.

KING'S BROMLEY: THE HOME OF LEOFRIC.]

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* J. R. Green: "The Conquest of England," p. 31.

In its chief features the custom prevailed during the sub-rule of its earls, and its long survival is seen in the royal progresses of the post-conquest monarchs. But instead of hill camps and strongholds, rapid changes and forced marches, favoured spots were now fixed upon for the houses of the nobles, and Leofric's Staffordshire home at Bromley was sufficiently attractive, particularly in his declining years, to draw him from busier scenes and the cares of a laborious and responsible life.

After the period of Æthelred and Ethelfleda's rule no other Earl of Mercia obtained prominence until Earl Alfhere, who, during the reigns of Edgar, Edward the Martyr, and the unready Ethelred, attained considerable notoriety. He was much abused by the monks, but has, on the other hand, been called one of the best supporters of his county. Dying in 983 he was succeeded by his son Alfric.

Alfric, Ulfric, or Wulfric, is closely allied with Staffordshire as the founder of Burton Abbey. He was superseded in his high position by Edric Streon, probably the most accomplished villain of any age. This worthy was a favourite of Ethelred, whose daughter he married, and is credited with the murder and blinding of members of Wulfric's family, the murders of Morcar and Sigforth, and the overthrow of his country by carefully-planned treason. Eventually he deserted to Canute, and ultimately effected the murder of King Edmund. As a fitting reward for these services he was put to death by Canute and his body thrown into the Thames.

At this period (1017), Canute vested the rule of Mercia in Leofwine, an Ælderman of the Hwiccas, and his son Leofric, and the latter speedily succeeded to the earldom.

The family of Leofric, allied to the royal stock, was of great antiquity He is called Leofric III., Earl of Hereford, of Leicester, and sometimes of Chester, the son of Leofwine, who was the son of Algar II., the son of Leofric II., the son of Algar I., the son of Leofric I. The name of Leuric, Earl of Leicester, appears as far back as 716 in one of the doubtful Charters of Croyland Abbey, and Algar the Thane in another of 806, whilst Algar the brave Earl of Lincoln, who in 806 is described in another Charter of King Burhred as "the most valiant Earl Algar, deservedly held most dear by me," and also as "the renowned Earl Algar," gave the Manor of Spalding to Croyland for the good of the soul of his father, Earl Algar the Elder.

In 869 this same Earl, with his knights Wibert and Leofric, and Morcar, the Lord of Brunne (Bourne), did King Alfred great service in defeating the Danes at Kesteven, but he was subsequently slain in battle. Even at this early period the family was connected with Staffordshire, for Earl Algar was Lord of Alrewas, which, according to a very ancient record, passed at his death to King Alfred.

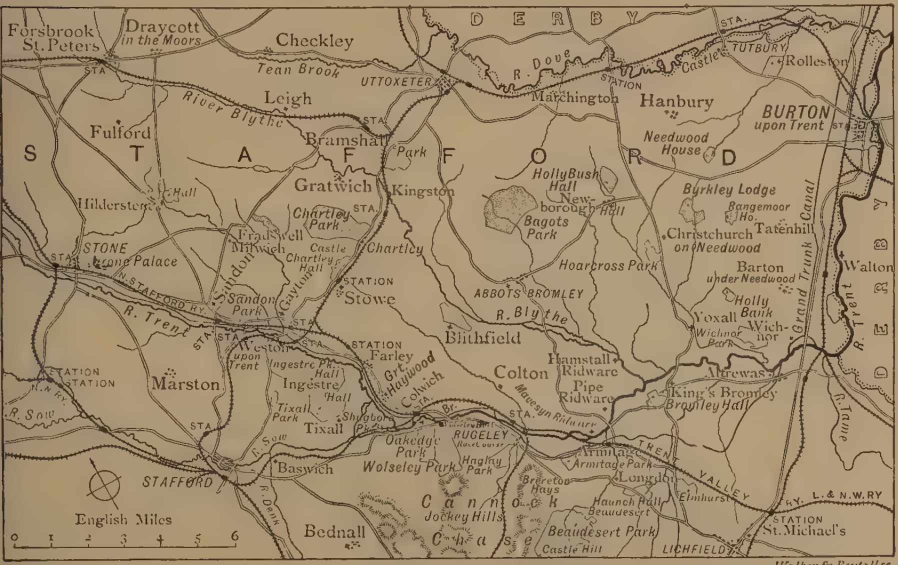
With a descent so illustrious Leofric's wife was of stock scarcely less noble—that of the Thorolds of Lincolnshire, connected with the Shrievalty as early as 806.

During the period of Leofric's power, 1017 to 1057, England passed through a series of contentions, struggles, and changes of great import. Its destiny was in the hands not of its kings only but of its king-makers, and at no subsequent period have changes so critical been effected with so little friction or so little spilling of blood.

From a long record of ambition and deceit, of reckless murders and cruel revenges, it is pleasant to turn to the lengthened and unblemished career of Leofric; the few materials of his life suffice for forming a judgment of his capacity, wisdom, and integrity. The early historians ever mention his name with a laudatory prefix: he is the most illustrious, the most virtuous, the most renowned. Bede says "he was very wise for God and also for the world, which was a blessing to all the nation," "the indolence of the King (Edward) was redeemed by having nobles to elevate and defend him," thus through all changes he stands out an unselfish power, a wise counsellor, firm in his opposition to the ambitions of Earl Godwin, yet interceding for him in his misfortune.

In works of bounty and charity he always went hand in hand with his wife, and the noble and richly endowed foundations of Wenlock, Stow, Leominster, and Coventry were their noblest monuments.

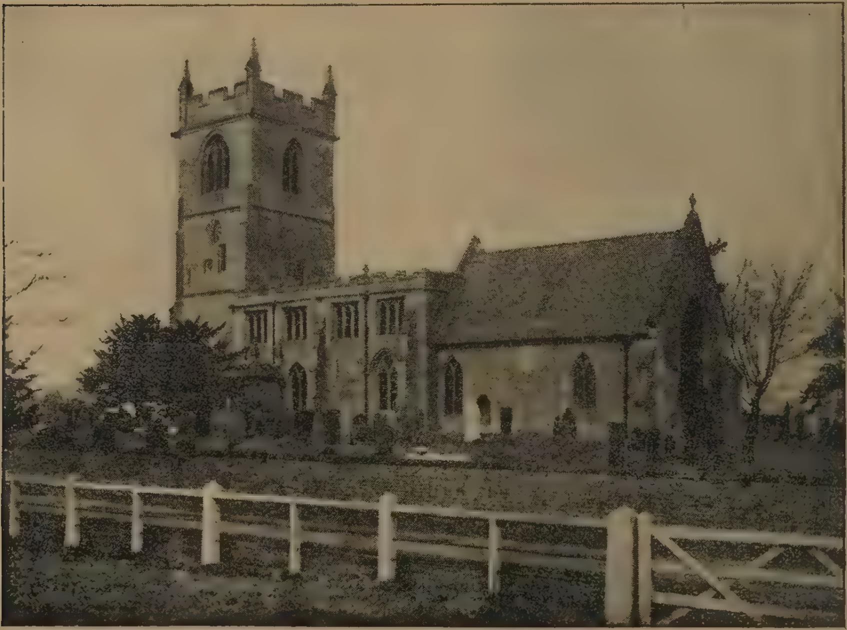
Leofric's possessions lay in the various counties of Mercia. In all parts of Staffordshire, particularly in the neighbourhood of Needwood Forest, they were the most numerous. Cannock, Rugeley, Drayton, Elford, Chartley, Uttoxeter, Tutbury, Rolleston, Barton, Alrewas, Braunston, and Bromley, were all estates of Saxon Kings. Most of these had probably been held under the over-lordship of the King, by all the ruling Earls. But that Bromley was the home where Leofric ended his days may possibly be due to some family connection of a remote period; the adjoining Manor of Alrewas, as already stated, being held under King Alfred by Algar, the Earl of Lincoln, and it is noteworthy that whilst nearly all the Staffordshire estates passed to Leofric's son Algar, Bromley, according to the Domesday record, came into the hands of King Harold, evidently as a marriage portion with Algitha, the daughter of Algar. Hence it is probable that it was Algar's home, and one to which his daughter was attached, and to which she returned after the tragedy which deprived her of her first husband, Griffith, King of Wales, and that here Harold, the future King, made her his wife.



Walker & Boutall sc.

LEOFRIC'S COUNTRY: VALLEY OF THE TRENT.

Although Leofric and Godiva had lavishly endowed so many monasteries, and according to the habit and custom of the time had specially enriched and beautified the great establishment at Coventry as a final resting place, it is in the quiet retirement of Bromley that we find their chosen home and see the truly English love of domestic peace which influenced their lives, until at last, ripe in years, honoured and revered by his countrymen, and troubled only by the absence of his son Hereward, the great Earl, statesman, soldier, and ruler passed away, the truest Englishman of his time, lamented by the chroniclers in words of honest praise, and his body was borne away for regal sepulture within the stately shrine at Coventry.



KING'S BROMLEY CHURCH.

Lapley Priory and its Founder.

THE story of the founding of the Priory at Lapley bears a marked resemblance, in its main features, to that of the founding of the noble Hospital and Priory Church of St. Bartholomew the Great, in London. Like Rahere the jester, to whom the latter institutions owe their origin, the founder of Lapley was on a pilgrimage to Rome and was lying sick in a foreign land when he was led to perform this act of pious munificence. In the train of English nobles who accompanied Aldred, Archbishop of York, when that prelate undertook his journey to Rome on behalf of Edward the Confessor, was Burchard, the son—probably the elder son—of Algar of Mercia; and as they returned homeward through France, Burchard fell grievously sick of a fever, and took up his lodging at Rheims. Finding himself face to face with death, his mind reverted to his Mercian home, and out of his patrimony he made liberal grants of vills and farms for the endowment of a Priory of Black Friars at Lapley, near his home at Bromley, giving the control of the same to the Abbey of St. Remigius, where he doubtless lay during his illness. After having thus done, he besought the abbot of St. Remigius, to whose hospitality he was already indebted, to allow his body to be buried in the abbey in which he was then lodged. This request was granted, and in due course he was buried in the *polyandrium* of the abbey, wherein alone it was possible for one who was not a member of the monastery to be interred.

Such was the origin of Lapley, and the grant thus made was ratified by Algar, Burchard's father, while, in addition to this endowment, Algar gave to the abbey of St. Remigius—doubtless in gratitude for the kindness his son had received there during his mortal sickness—the manors of Mepford (now Meaford) and Ridware, part of Hamstall Ridware, near King's Bromley. In Domesday these grants are duly recorded, and the story itself is stamped with unequivocal marks of truth. Chronology also, as Mr. Eyton points out in his *Domesday Studies*, is in support of this story, and "thus vouched for," he says, "the story itself helps to correct a hitherto defective chronology. Archbishop Aldred's return from Rome was in the summer of 1061. Algar, Earl of Mercia, said by the old genealogists to have died in 1059, has been shown by high authority (Mr. Freeman) to have been living much later, and probably to have died in 1062."

The manors given by Burchard to found the Priory comprised Marston and Lapley, near Penkridge. At the suppression of the alien priories by Henry V., the Lapley Cell or Priory was transferred to Tong, Salop, till it was again surrendered to the king, and was granted by Edward the Sixth to Richard Manners, and afterwards to the Brooke family.

LAPLEY CHURCH.

The Norman in Staffordshire.

IN the period preceding England's humiliation, when commerce and laws, learning and religious zeal were placing the nation on a level with the most civilized of European countries, the viking and freebooter, the Pagan warriors and the conquerors of King Arthur's race had intermingled, and Jute and Angle, Saxon and Dane had become a united people. On the very eve of its greatest calamity, a brighter future seemed assured. At no previous time was England better prepared for defence. The rivalry between the great houses of Godwin and Leofric had ceased, and Harold, the chosen king, wedded to the daughter of Algar, secure in the loyalty of the whole country, and possessed of many kingly qualities, commenced a reign full of promise for England and for himself.

Leofric's son and successor, Algar, had probably been a fighting man before 1039. He was made Earl of East Anglia in 1048, and succeeded to Mercia in 1057; owing, however, to various re-arranged boundaries, and the creation of new earldoms, this province was reduced to nearly its original limit of four-and-a-half centuries earlier—in other words, to Staffordshire, with some extensions, chiefly in Cheshire and Shropshire. His name is associated with all parts of Staffordshire, but particularly with the district around Bromley. Although the period of his death is not recorded, it took place between 1062-65. He left three daughters—Leverunia, the second wife of Turchill de Arden,* the son of Ailwyn, the under-Earl of Warwick, and nephew of Leofric; Algitha, who was married first to Griffith, the Welsh King, and afterwards to Harold, the last English King; and Lucy, the third daughter, who was disposed of in marriage by the new Norman King, in regard to her estates in Lincolnshire, where she may probably have retired with her grandmother, Godiva. Algar's three sons were Edwin, Morcar, and Burchard. The last-named died at Rheims on the return journey from Rome in 1061; but the two former, with their famous uncle, Hereward, became for some years the most prominent men in England. Algar's brother Hereward—Hereward the Wake, the last of the English, renowned in song and story—may in early life have had a close connection with Staffordshire, but he was absent in Flanders at the time of the Conquest, and it was not until after the Conquest that, by his exploits in the Fens of Ely, he gained for himself an undying name.

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* The descent of Shakespeare from Turchill de Arden is now generally accepted.

At Algar's death, his son Edwin became the ruler of Mercia, and subsequently—three months before the death of King Edward—Morcar replaced Harold's brother, Tostig, who was driven from the earldom and rule of Northumbria, which then extended southward to Northampton. Henceforth, through their short but eventful lives, Edwin and Morcar were most intimately associated, like twin brothers.

After the death of Edward the Confessor, in January, 1066, the fighting strength of England lay in the hands of Harold and the two brothers of his wife, for Harold's rule in the south was absolute; yet it was by the free choice of the people that Harold became King, and, full of promise, commenced a reign which was destined to be at once brief and disastrous.

As every reader of history knows, whilst William the Norman was preparing his Armada, Tostig—who, like William, had married a daughter of Baldwin of Flanders—was harassing the whole eastern coast of England, and finally landed in the Humber, but was driven back by Edwin and Morcar. Tostig, however, effected an alliance with the Norwegian King, who, with 300 ships and overwhelming forces, landed near York, and on the 20th September defeated the hastily recruited army of the brothers. Harold had, by forced marches, in four days reached York, and obtained a complete victory on the 25th. On the 28th the Normans landed in Sussex, and the news reached York on the 2nd or 3rd of October. Again the exhausted army of Harold was compelled to undertake forced marches, and reaching London, pressed onward towards the south coast. Too confident of victory to wait for reinforcements, Harold hazarded the battle at Senlac, near Hastings, on the 14th of October, in which, at the close of the day, he was slain by a chance arrow.

It has never been conclusively proved whether the brothers had reached Sussex before the battle. It was harvest season, and a difficult period to collect fighting men. It is only known that for a time they strove against fate, as leaders of the remnant of the Saxon army. They endeavoured to raise the youthful Edgar to the throne; they held London against the Normans, but the Bishop and Clergy opposed them. The citizens were half-hearted, and the history of the previous fifty years had taught the people, who suffered most from the almost incessant strife, that a change of dynasty was a less evil than further and possibly useless fighting. A successful resistance was, therefore, no longer possible, and the brothers retired northward, and eventually submitted to the Normans, and with their submission the rule of the Saxon was at an end.

Our chroniclers describe Edwin and Morcar as fine, handsome young men, and Edwin became attached to King William's daughter. The King encouraged the proposed alliance for a time, and then, altering his mind, discouraged it. Edwin and Morcar left the court and aroused their vassals for rebellion; but afterwards returned and were received again into favour.

In 1069, they were still with the King at Exeter. Rebellion again broke out in Yorkshire, but there is no evidence of the active participation of the brothers therein. The King returned northward again. Then Staffordshire revolted, and, having quelled the rising, he marched back, desolation and waste following his progress, and the estates of Edwin and Morcar in both counties were transferred to the King's relations and adherents.

In 1070, Cheshire revolted, and the King built a castle at Chester, and another at Stafford, and Edwin's Staffordshire manors were probably now all forfeited, for both he and Morcar were kept at court under surveillance. But from this virtual imprisonment they soon afterwards escaped, and William's influence with them was at an end. Gathering together a force of English, Scotch, and Welsh adherents, they commenced a forlorn rebellion, of which Staffordshire was the chief battle-ground, and it is probable that the castle of Stafford was destroyed. Domesday records the state of waste to which the county was reduced. Before October, 1071, Edwin met his death whilst journeying to the court of Scotland. His end is as mysterious as his life's history. Tradition says he was killed by his own followers, but it is more probable that he fell a victim to the treachery of some one of the Conqueror's adherents. Morcar joined his uncle Hereward in the Isle of Ely, and his ultimate fate is not known.

Thierry * tells us that both brothers went to Ely; that Morcar was persuaded to quit the camp for the court, and was immediately put in irons in the fortress of Roger de Beaumont in Normandy, and that Edwin also left the camp to seek the deliverance of his country, but was sold to the Normans by two traitors; that with twenty knights he defended himself against overwhelming forces, and that his enemies cut off his head and carried it to the King, who wept over his fate as of a man he loved.

The ancient domains of the family of Algar and of Thorold about Spalding passed to Lucy, the sister of Edwin and Morcar, and were afterwards given by the Conqueror to his nephew, Ivo Taillebois the Angevin.

The estates of the Mercian earls in various shires were speedily distributed among the land-hungering followers of the Conqueror. Many a Midland baron got for his share an estate which for ages was the upholding of his rank. Royal vills became the possessions of the hangers-on of William the Norman and his barons, and the old bond of attachment between the lord and the tiller of the soil was rudely sundered.

In Staffordshire, with the exception of the very extensive church and abbey lands connected with Lichfield, Burton, and Hampton, the numerous holdings of thanes and freemen, and a few royal manors belonging to the Saxon Kings, all the remaining manors were held by Earl Edwin until his forfeiture in 1069-70, although the names of Leofric, Godiva, and Algar are variously entered as former owners.

The changes in connection with the Church lands effected by the Conquest

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* "Norman Conquest," 1071.

(or by the events intervening before the compiling of Domesday, 1085-6) were unimportant. Not so, however, with regard to those of the thanes, who in great part were doubtless holders under the Mercian earls or the Countess Godiva.

As to two-thirds of the town of Stafford, and the Lordships of Wednesbury, Walsall, Bescot, Willenhall, Bilston, Tettenhall, Trentham, and Penkridge, over all of which Harold became lord in succession to Edward the Confessor, William was entered as owner in succession to Edward;* but in the case of Bromley, to which Harold was entitled in right of his wife Algitha, William's name appears as successor to the former owner Harold, and hereafter Bromley takes the name of King's Bromley.

Of the estates which had passed from Leofric to Algar, and from Algar to Edwin, and became forfeited in 1069-70, one-third of the town of Stafford, the Manors of Alrewas, Sandon, Chartley, Wolstanton, Penkhull, Rocester, Crakemarsh, Uttoxeter, Barton-under-Needwood, Leek, Rugeley, Mayfield, Meertown, Cannock, Elford, Kinver, Pattingham, Clifton, Drayton (Basset), Hopwas, and Harlaston, were retained by the king for sixteen years, until the date of Domesday survey, but considerable re-arrangement was effected shortly after that period.

The largest grantee of lands in the county was Robert de Stafford, a possessory name taken by Robert Toni, the son of Roger de Toni, the standard bearer of Normandy, who was slain in battle in 1042. This large concession of territory included the county town of Stafford, the castle whereof was then destroyed by William, as previously stated.

When in March, 1067, Earls Edwin and Morcar went in company with the new King to Normandy, they were accompanied on their return home in the December following by Roger de Montgomery, afterwards made Earl of Shrewsbury. To this Roger passed many of the estates and manors which had been held by Saxon thanes and freemen, together with four of the estates of the Mercian earls in Seisdon Hundred, one in Culveston, one belonging to the Countess Godiva in Pirehill. Hugh, the son of

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* It was the policy of the compilers of Domesday to ignore Harold altogether; hence former holders of the land were given as "t. r. E.," in the time of King Edward; if they had only held during Harold's time they were said to have held "in the time that Edward the king was alive and dead,"

Roger de Mongomery, possessed, according to Domesday, one manor of the Mercian earls, viz., Worfield, and this manor controlled the five burgages of the earls in Stafford.

R. Keene *Burton-on-Trent*

ROLLESTON.

Edwin's title of Earl of Chester was bestowed upon Hugh de Avranches, but it is difficult to trace to what extent he participated in the Staffordshire estates, from the fact that, before the date of the Domesday survey, he had been succeeded by Henry de Ferrers, who had fought in the battle of Senlac (or Hastings), and afterwards acted as one of the Domesday Commissioners in Worcestershire. The latter held many of the estates of Earl Edwin, including Tutbury and its castle, and made this his principal seat, and he had succeeded to many surrounding manors, among which

Rolleston is worthy of special mention, as being the only estate formerly held by Earl Morcar, and the only one in the county having a female serf.

Among other Norman successors to the estates of the Saxon lords we should not omit to mention William Fitz-Ansculf (or Ausculf) who succeeded to four estates of the Countess Godiva and to two of Algar; and Chenuin, probably the Richard Cheven to whom the Conqueror gave lands in Chesterton and elsewhere for his services as keeper of the forest of Cannock (who is elsewhere known as Richard the Forester, and held ten estates in Staffordshire); there were also others whose names became intimately associated with the later history of the county upon whose waste and plunder their own fortunes arose.

C. E. Weale, *Tamworth.*

TAMWORTH CASTLE.

"Tamworth Tower and Town," and its Norman Lords.

DURING the century-and-a-half which elapsed between the death of Ethelfleda and the Norman Conquest, Tamworth Castle, which still continued to be one of the residences of the Saxon lords, was the scene of several stirring events in the history of Mercia. It was the scene of the meeting between Athelstan and Sihtric, the Danish king of Northumbria, in 925, when a treaty of peace was signed between them, and Athelstan gave his sister Eadgith in marriage to the Dane. The peace was of a short duration, however. Sihtric died a few years afterwards, and in 943, Anlaf, or Olaf, his son, who had already been settled in Northumbria, made war upon Edmund the Elder, Athelstan's brother and successor in the kingdom of Mercia, and the Viking hosts poured down upon Mercia, laying siege to Tamworth and Leicester, in order to gain control of the Trent Valley. The swarm of mail-clad berserkers stormed the fortress-crowned hill at Tamworth, and captured it with great slaughter, making a prisoner of Wulfrun, who was, probably, governor of the castle.

Tamworth remained in the hands of the Danes until the death of Anlaf, about a year afterwards, when it passed back into the control of the boy-king, Edmund. It remained a royal town until the Norman Conquest, when "Tamworth tower and town" became the possession of one of the most powerful of the Norman barons, the steward of the Conqueror himself, who is known to us from the Domesday survey and other records as Robert Dispensator, or Robert le Despencer. There are many points of coincidence which would lead us to identify Robert le Despencer with Robert Marmion, the lord of Fontenay, who had distinguished himself in the battle of Hastings. In the first place there was, according to Dugdale, a legend and device in the stained-glass window at the east end of Tamworth Church, depicting and recording the circumstance of the grant of Tamworth Castle to the lord of Fontenay;* secondly, out of the forty places set down in Domesday as belonging to Robert le Despencer, the great proportion were afterwards in the possession of the Marmion family; thirdly, in the Roll of Battle Abbey, the name of Marmion is frequently coupled with the style of "the Despencer."

There is, moreover, a curious legend, which Dugdale found in a "very old" parchment, in the possession of the Ferrers family, at Tamworth Castle, which tells in quaint, homely, Saxon phraseology, how the Conqueror "gave . . . . to Sir Robert Marmyon the castyll of Tomworth and the forren londys without, and the town of Tomworth that was in the tyme of the Conquest a wolrich at the watur wend;" and how the said Robert Marmion chased away the Abbess Osith and all the nuns of the Abbey of

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* This device is reproduced from Dugdale on p. 73.

Polesworth, which had been founded by "King Egbryght," and given to his daughter, "sent Edyth." The legend goes on to tell of a vision with which Marmion was favoured after this exploit; how the spirit of the deceased St. Editha appeared before him, and demanded the restitution of the lands which her father, Ecgberht, had given to her, threatening him with the pains of hell if he refused her request. And lest he should forget or make light of her request, she smote him in the side with the point of her cross, so that he woke with a fearful cry and a wound in his side "as if hee had byn at a mortall batyll." This wound gave him no rest until he had fulfilled the saint's behest, restored the Abbey of Polesworth, and brought back the ladies from Oldbury, where they had been in retreat.

The historian of Tamworth, Mr. C. F. Palmer, however, discredits this legend, the manuscript of which has long been lost, and points out that the foundation of the Abbey of Polesworth is set down by the most trustworthy annalists to Ethelwulf, King of Wessex, and that the nuns were not restored to Polesworth until the reign of Stephen; and all the best authorities decline to accept the statement that Tamworth was given by the Conqueror to Robert Marmion, or the theory of identity of the latter with Robert le Despencer. It is possible, therefore, that "Tamworth tower and town" did not come into the possession of the Marmion family until the beginning of the reign of Henry I., when the Despencer, having fallen under the displeasure of the King, forfeited his estates, and they were given by Henry to Sir Roger Marmion, a kinsman of the man who had thus fallen into disgrace.

It was the successor of this Roger, Sir Robert Marmion, who brought back the nuns to Polesworth Abbey, in or about the year 1139. Sir Robert Marmion was one of the staunchest supporters of Stephen against the claims of the Empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I., to the throne of England; and when Stephen was made prisoner at Lincoln, February 2nd, 1141, and Matilda declared herself "Lady of England and Normandy," she gave the town and castle of Tamworth to one of her adherents, Sir William de Beauchamp. Sir Robert Marmion, however, remained faithful to the unfortunate King, and fought desperately on his behalf, attacking the Earl of Chester (a partisan of Matilda) at Coventry. For this purpose Marmion had gathered together a lawless band, and marched from Tamworth to Coventry, and having dispossessed the monks of the Benedictine priory there, he made a castle of their church. He also carried into execution a piece of strategy which recoiled fatally upon himself. He caused a number of deep ditches to be dug in the outskirts of the city, and lightly covered them over with earth, in order to entrap the Earl's troops; but in the heat of the conflict which took place near his monastic fortress on the 8th of

GRANT OF TAMWORTH CASTLE TO THE LORD OF FONTENAY.

From a device formerly in the east window of Tamworth Church. (See p 71.

September, 1143, his horse plunged into one of the pits which he had digged for his foes, and he fell from his saddle and broke his thigh. As he lay, enmeshed in his own toils, a cobbler ran up and despatched him with a knife. He was buried in unconsecrated ground, in the orchard belonging to the nunnery which he had restored at Polesworth.

The castle of Tamworth was restored to Sir Robert Marmion's son by Stephen, after the insurrection of the Empress Matilda had been quelled; but there is little to detain us in the life of the younger Robert, the fourth baron of Tamworth. His son, Robert, the fifth baron, is better known, however. He was one of the justiciaries, or itinerant justices, appointed by Henry II., to whom were committed the administration of criminal law and the assessment of various taxes. He served as Sheriff of Worcestershire in 1186, and was justiciary for various Midland Counties between 1187 and 1194. He was one of those who took the vow for the crusade with Richard Cœur de Leon, but purchased exemption from this service by gifts to the monastery of Barberay and the monks of Thame. His third son, William, entered the church, and became Dean of Tamworth. In later life the justiciary fell under the displeasure of his sovereign, the weak and fickle King John, owing to his having joined the cause of the barons, and thus is numbered among those to whom we owe the Great Charter. For the part he had taken in this memorable struggle he was called upon to forfeit certain of his lands, and in the December of 1215—the year which was signalised by the granting of Magna Charta—the king ordered Thomas de Erdington, the sheriff of Staffordshire and Salop, to proceed with some of the royal forces to Tamworth Castle, and to level the stronghold of Sir Robert Marmion to the ground. In this, however, the sheriff and his forces had to reckon with the baron's supporters in his own town, and the men of Tamworth turned the tables on the despoilers by besieging them in the castle, and starving them into a more conciliatory frame of mind.

Only two other representatives of the Marmion family in the male line held Tamworth Castle, namely Robert, the son of the justiciary, who succeeded his father in or about 1218, and his son Philip, the last English baron of the elder branch of the Marmions. It is probable that Philip was

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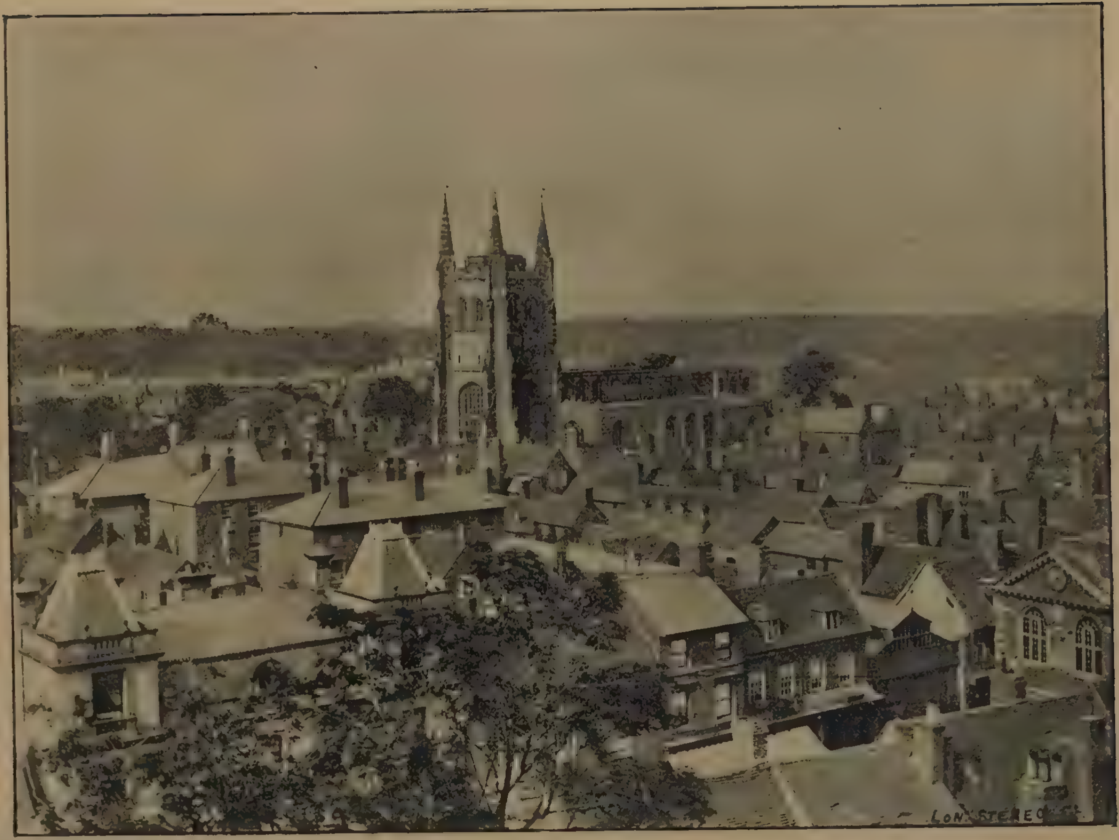


C. E. Weale, Tamworth

TAMWORTH, FROM THE CASTLE KEEP.

the only representative of his line who filled the office with which the name of Marmion is associated in popular tradition,—that of royal champion at the coronation of the English sovereign. The manor of Scrivelsby is said to have been held by the Marmions in virtue of this service, but this rests entirely upon tradition, and the tradition is probably based upon the solitary mention of the office in a writ of 23 Edward III. (1349) where it is stated that the holder of the manor of Scrivelsby was accustomed to perform this service. It may, therefore, with little hesitation be assumed that Philip Marmion, who was the ancestor of the Dymokes of Scrivelsby, served the office of king's champion at the coronation of Edward III. This relic of mediæval pageantry has since been associated with the Dymoke family, and was performed for the last time by Henry Dymoke at the coronation of George the Fourth on the 19th of July, 1821, when the champion rode up Westminster Hall in great state, accompanied by the Duke of Wellington and Lord Howard of Effingham.

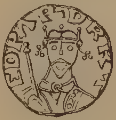
On the death of Philip Marmion, which occurred in 1291, the Castle of Tamworth passed to his eldest daughter, Jane, the widow of William Morteyn, and she dying childless in 1295, was succeeded by her niece, Jane, daughter of Philip Marmion's second daughter, and wife of Alexander de Freville. The Castle thence became the inheritance of the Frevilles, and subsequently of the Ferrers family, but with these later stages of its history we do not propose to speak here.

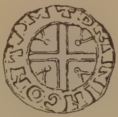
During the lordship of the Marmion family the ensign, which through so many years of storm and stress floated proudly from the top of the grim old fortress, gave place on several occasions to the "lion flag of England." It is not improbable, indeed, that all the three "illustrious Henries," under whom the Marmions lived, paid visits to the powerful barons at their castle in Tamworth. Henry I., we know, came hither between 1109 and 1116, and while at Tamworth granted to Godwin a monk of the Abbey of St. Remigius at Rheims, the right to the church of Lapley, in Staffordshire, and dated his writ to this effect at Tamworth. He had with him a goodly retinue on this visit, for the writ was witnessed by Robert Bloet, Bishop of Lincoln; Roger, Bishop of Salisbury; William Walrewast, Bishop of Exeter; Geoffrey Ridell and Alured de Lincoln. Henry I. probably came again to Tamworth between the death of Roger Marmion, in 1129 and 1133, as he was at Cannock, and granted free warren to Sir Robert Marmion in all his land in Warwickshire, in wood and plain, and as the historian of the Marmion family has said, "The wild woodlands and chases around Tamworth, abounding in game for the favourite pastime of king and nobles, might well suggest the return for the hospitality of the new baron."

Henry II., the first of the Plantagenets, came to Tamworth during the lordship of the fourth baron, Robert, the father of the justiciary. Sir Robert Marmion had been with the king at Shrewsbury, at the end of the winter of 1157-8, and witnessed a grant made by Henry to the monks of Haughmond; and he seems to have attended the king on his royal progress from Shrewsbury, through Bridgnorth to Tamworth. Henry was attended by a still more famous retinue than the first Henry had brought with him, for among those who were guests of the Lord of Tamworth Castle on this occasion was the great Thomas á Becket, though not yet Archbishop of Canterbury, and with him his predecessor in the primacy, Archbishop Theobald, William, Bishop of Chester, Roger, Earl of Hereford, Joscelyn de Balliol, and other nobles.

If Henry III. visited Tamworth it must have been during the royal progress which he made in 1257 from Coventry to Lichfield. It is probable, as Mr. Palmer suggests, that the last of the barons of Tamworth, Sir Philip Marmion, welcomed the King into his castle during this progress, as he accompanied the King on his march from the Midlands into Wales, to quell the rebellion which Llewelynn ap Griffith had raised in that part of the King's dominions. If so this was the last royal visit to Tamworth for many a year. One who was on the eve of his accession to the throne came hither, as we shall see in a future chapter, but not as a guest within the walls of Tamworth Castle. "Tamworth Tower and Town" had by this time played its part in the history of the country, it was henceforth to occupy a less important place among the English towns.

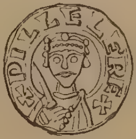
Probably as far back as Offa's time Tamworth had enjoyed, with other royal vills, the privileges of coining, and some examples of the local mint have come down to us, of which we give facsimiles. Previous to the time of Athelstan it was not usual to inscribe on the coin the name of the "moneyer," or the place of issue, but of later coinage Pitt records, in his "History of Staffordshire," an example of the time of Canute having on the reverse the inscription "Edric on Tam.," that is, "Edric, Moneyer, in Tamworth." We give engravings of three specimens of the Tamworth mint. The first represents the obverse and reverse of a silver penny of the time of Edward the Confessor,

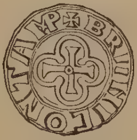




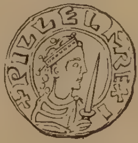
with the signature of Bruning as the "moneyer," by whom it was coined, in the same form as in the recorded specimen of Edric, viz., Brvning on Tam.

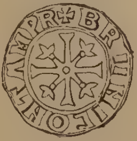
The second engraving is that of a silver penny of William the Conqueror, the work of the same mint-master.





The third example presents a profile portrait of William I. or II., and is also issued by Bruning. It will be noticed that in this case the abbreviation of the name of Tamworth varies, the inscription being Brvnig on Tampr.





The royal mint of Tamworth continued in activity until the time of Henry I., in whose reign it was discontinued.

REMAINS OF THE ABBEY, DIEU-LA-CRES.

Earl Ranulph's Abbey of the Moorlands.

THE inglorious reign of King John had come to an end, and his youthful son had been firmly seated on the throne; Louis had been driven away never to return, and many of the Barons after their long and bitter strife, sought for change in a journey to the Holy Land. Foremost among these was Ranulph, Earl of Chester, the great grandson of Lucy, the daughter of Algar the Saxon, and upon returning to his home in Staffordshire, in 1221, he founded in that year the Cistercian Abbey, which he named Dieu-la-cres.

The vale, through which ran the Upper Churnet—now a mere streamlet—surrounded by wood and water, lofty hills and wild moorland, was an ideal site for the foundation, and in the beauty and seclusion of its position few of our old religious houses were more favoured. Little now remains of the once stately and wealthy Abbey rich in its traditions and interesting from its early historic connection ; but nestling away in the bosom of a lovely pastoral valley, the little that remains of its former greatness is deeply impressive.

The chequered career of the thrice-married Lucy, Countess of Lincoln and of Chester, whose early life is connected with our shire, is one of unusual interest. Heiress to the house she was given by the Conqueror with her great estates in Lincolnshire to Ivo Taillebois, the Norman, a nephew of the king, a man who in all ages, in song and story, has been held up to detestation as a type of the hated Norman oppressor, and whose character has been vigorously portrayed in Kingsley's "Hereward the Wake."

After the death of this worthy the king wedded her to the Lord of Bolingbroke, Gerald de Romare, probably about 1090. A son, William, a valiant soldier at home and abroad, who became Earl of Lincoln, was the result of this marriage. Again left a widow she was a third time disposed of and married Ranulph de Meschines, a Norman Baron, of Cumberland and Carlisle, where presumably she held some of her brother Morcar's lands.

Long afterwards, 1119, Ranulph became Earl of Chester, and resigned these lands to Henry I. William de Romare subsequently claimed them as his mother's inheritance, being refused he raised the standard of rebellion and retired to Normandy, but in two years was reconciled and compensated.

The history of the Earls of Chester is inseparable from that of our county. Upon the forfeiture of Earl Edwin, 1070, one Gherbod, of Flanders, stepson of the Conqueror, was made Earl, the same year he returned over the water and never came back, and the king's nephew, Hugh de Avranches eke named the "Wolf," and eke the "Fat," had the title and lands to hold by the sword.

Hugh, the "Wolf," left one legitimate son, Richard, born 1094. He married a sister of King Stephen, but in 1119, crossing from Barfleur with the Royal princes, William and Richard, their tutor Ottiwel (natural, brother of Earl Richard), Geffrey Ridel (the Earl's brother-in-law), and

140 young noblemen, their vessel the "White Ship" was wrecked and all were lost.

This disaster ended the line of Hugh Lupus; Ranulph de Meschines, Hugh's nephew, the third husband of Lucy the Saxon, succeeded him. Both the Earl and Countess must have attained an advanced age; Ranulph died 1128, and his widow is said to have paid King Stephen 500 marks to avoid a fourth marriage. If this be true she must have lived until 1135, when past her eightieth year.

The eldest of four children, Ranulph, born in Normandy, succeeded his father. With his half-brother, William de Romare, he was closely associated in various achievements during the wars of Stephen and Maud, particularly in the capture of Stephen at Lincoln.

Ranulph married Maud, daughter of the famous Robert, Earl of Gloucester, and grand-daughter of Henry I. His eventful life closed in 1153, when it is said he was poisoned by William Peverell.

Previous to 1086 the Conqueror had found it convenient to transfer the Staffordshire estates to various other Norman followers. During the lives of Ranulph and Lucy and their son, many of the Staffordshire manors were recovered, the whole neighbourhood of Leek being one of the earliest.

Before the death of Ranulph the son, the Plantagenet Duke, afterwards Henry II., had made him a grant, which had it become operative would have given him nearly the whole of the Staffordshire estates formerly belonging to his mother's family.*

Hugh (surnamed Keveliok), son of Ranulph, had the earldom nearly thirty years, spent partly in rebellion, partly in prison. He died in 1180-81, at Swythamley, near Leek,† his partiality for which place as a hunting seat was evidently shared by the other Earls, for there his son, Ranulph, the succeeding Earl, founded the Cistercian Abbey, Dieu-la-cres, on a spot where a Chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin had been placed by one of his ancestors.

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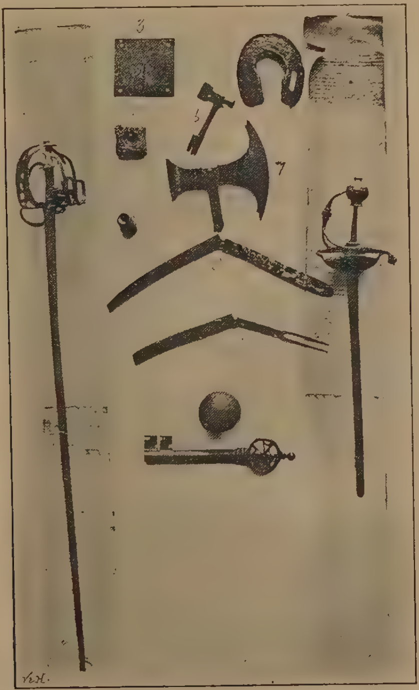
* Particulars of the efforts made by Earl Ranulph to acquire the Staffordshire estates will be found in "The Liber Niger Scaccarii," by Col. the Hon. G. Wrottesley, Salt Collections, Vol. 1, p. 230.

† Near the base of the very ancient runic Cross in Leek Parish Churchyard, a stone has been found bearing the inscription H.Q.C.C. (*Hugo, quintus Comes Cestrinæ.*) 1180.

Earl Ranulph, the founder, was small in stature, yet withal a most valiant soldier. He was knighted 1188 by Henry II., married Constance, the widow of Geoffrey Plantagenet and mother of the ill-fated Prince Arthur, and was the companion in arms of Richard Cœur de Lion both at home and in Normandy, and subsequently in the Holy Land; he was also a supporter of King John during his reign. He divorced his wife Constance by reason, says Dugdale, that King John haunted her company. He afterwards, according to an old monk of Peterborough, was the chief instrument in the succession of Henry III., receiving as a reward for his



ANCIENT RELICS FOUND NEAR SWYTHAMLEY.

services the Earldom of Lincoln, which curiously he claimed in right of his great-grandmother, the Countess Lucy.

His second wife, Clementina, the young and wealthy widow of Alan de Dinant, was the Countess connected with the oft-told story of the founding of the Abbey. Few religious houses were without a story of monkish origin, attributing the founding of their Abbey to a miracle, but the story of the monks of Dieu-la-cres is within the limit of probability, if we rightly regard the ghostly admonition as a dream. After retiring to bed, so runs the story, the spirit of his grandfather (presumedly his paternal grandsire, Earl Ranulph) appeared to him and bade him repair to a place called Cholpesdale near unto Leek, and there found and endow an Abbey of White Monks, with various minute directions and prophecies which very accurately accord with the future history of the Abbey, and upon relating his vision to his wife next morning—she exclaimed, "Deu encres," or God increase the pious resolve of her lord, whereupon pleased with the expression he caused the Abbey to be so named. A more reasonable account of the foundation is given by Robert Fabian, the London Chronicler, *temp.* Henry VII.

> "1221. This year came out of the Holy Land into Englande, Ranulphe, erle of Chester, and beganne to buylde the Castellys of Charteley and of Bestone, and after he buylded ye Abbey of De lacresse of ye whyte ordere, for charge and cost of whiche sayd Castellys and Abbay he toke toll through all his lordshippes of all suche as passyd that way with any chaffre or marchaundyse."

During the 50 years he was Earl, Ranulph was the close ally of four kings, his life was full of interest and activity until its close; he died childless in 1231.

The possessions of the Abbey were of considerable extent, a great part had at the date of Domesday Survey been returned as waste; such names as Wild Boar Clough, Elkstone, Wolfdale, Wolflow, Boarsley, &c., &c., are indicative of their character. The whole neighbourhood of Swythamley has great and varied charms; and whilst the High Forest, Ludchurch and Meal Ark Clough, the Roches and the High Clouds strike the visitor with wonder, language scarcely suffices to do justice to the beauty of the scenery around the valley of the picturesque Dane.

ON THE RIVER DANE.

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There are yet considerable survivals of the ancient Forest of Leek and Swythamley,—traditionally the resort of Robin Hood, and the Back Forest and High Forest, with the surrounding wilds stretching away into Cheshire and Derbyshire, yet attest the facilities the district afforded the Abbots of old in fishing, hawking, and the chase. Even at the present day the red

W. H. Horne, *Leek.*

THE DUNGE FALLS, UPPER HULME.

grouse is abundant, and whilst never found in England further south than North Staffordshire, the hills or mountains and the stretches of heather are likely to attract the birds in their present plenitude for a long time to come.

A free warren was granted to the Abbot by Edward I.* but reservation was made within the limits of Macclesfield Forest. This, however, did not restrain the sporting proclivities of the monks, who were brought to book for taking stags with their hounds and carrying them to the Abbey; in this, however, they but followed a custom common to all the religious houses of their time.

THE ANCIENT MANORIAL COURT ROOM, SWYTHAMLEY.

The last Abbot of Dieu-la-cres was Lord Thomas Whitney. He is chiefly noted for having provided himself in anticipation of the approaching dissolution with various blank parchments with the Abbey seal affixed, upon which he subsequently had several ante-dated leases prepared.

After the dissolution the grange and park of Swythamley, with the forest and keeper's house, were granted to William Trafford, Esq., (a name to be again referred to hereafter) from whom the present owner is descended. The Abbey passed to Sir Ralph Bagenholt, and in 1597 to Thomas Rudyard, of Rudyard, of a Saxon family located at Rudyard in the time of Canute; in 1684 the ruins, with Leek Leekfrith and Rudyard Manors, passed to William Trafford, Esq.; and in the early part of the present century an Abbey of French Nuns occupied part of the site.

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* This Grant is still in the possession of P. L. Brocklehurst, Esq., of Swythamley.

Few parallel instances of long continued ownership of so considerable a tract of country in one family exist in the kingdom. The present Lord of the Manor, P. L. Brocklehurst, Esq., until recent times, held his Manorial Court Leet and Baron, thus preserving many of the usages according to ancient custom which had probably existed before the Earls of Chester succeeded to the ownership of the districts around Swythamley.

The Knights Templars in Staffordshire, and the Overthrow of their Order.

THE fact that the Knights Templars had a house within the County of Stafford,—at Keele, about a mile from Newcastle*—gives local interest to the strange story of the suppression of that Order in the reign of Edward II.

By the end of the thirteenth century the Order of Knight Templars had become an anachronism. They no longer fared forth to the destruction of Paladin and Saracen; after the fall of Acre the Holy Land from end to end was in the hands of the followers of Mahomet; the members of this Order, half warrior, half priest, had accumulated great riches, and their frequent quarrels with the kindred Order of Knights Hospitallers had become a grievous scandal. Yet they still held what seemed an unassailable position, when, as by a bolt out of the blue, the Order was broken up, its vast resources were seized, and the great organization scattered into nothingness.

With the dawn of the fourteenth century strange rumours began to be prevalent as to the half Pagan rites practised within the Templars' strongholds, and it was openly declared that the Knights themselves had abjured the faith of Christianity, and had become, in secret, followers of Mahomet. Doubtless the thought of the great wealth which had been accumulated by the Order in France induced Philip le Bel, the French king, to make use of these rumours as a ground for the persecution and suppression of the Order—which he carried out with the most cruel ferocity, and thereby greatly enriched himself and his followers. Mainly through the influence of that monarch, Edward II. was induced to execute similar ordinances against the Knights Templars in England. No tortures seem to have been brought to bear upon the Templars during the form of investigation which was undertaken in England, but the Order was promptly doomed to immediate extinction throughout the land. In Staffordshire the Sheriff was ordered to be at Lichfield early in the morning of the morrow of the Epiphany in 1308, with a trusty band of fourteen men, and there they remained in readiness in obedience to the mandate, awaiting further instructions. Five days later a secret missive came to the Sheriff, directing him to arrest all members of the Order of Knights Templars then living within the county, and to seize their property, writings, and chattels. The preceptory at Keele which belonged to the Order was thereupon seized and the Templars were scattered. Some joined the Monastic Orders, others went back into the world, and to their families, and not a few, as Mr. Froude says, "offered their swords and services to secular princes, having had enough of the Church." Thus the great and powerful order of warrior priests which had struck terror into the hearts of the Saracens, had overawed kings, and had dazzled all Christendom with their matchless prowess, crumbled to pieces in an hour, at the bidding of an avaricious monarch and his all too willing tools. But underneath the external causes of the extinction of the Order must be recognised the great cause without which the machinations of Pope and King would have availed nothing. The Order of Knights Templars had accomplised its work and had outlasted its day; hence the hour had struck for its overthrow. Only the touch of external circumstances was needed to cause the empty husk whose kernel had already perished to crumble to dust.

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* "Frès militie Templi tenent, Kel, membrum Novi Castri de dono D'ni Reg. H. et nichil reddunt."—*Testa de Nevill.*

Many references to this Preceptory of the Knights Templars at Keele are to be found in the Pipe Rolls, and other State records. In the Assize Rolls of 55 Henry III., taken at Wolverhampton, an action was heard against "Imbert, the Master of the Knights Templars in England, *Roger de Boniton, the Preceptor of Kel* (Keele), and six others, by Geoffrey Griffin, the plaintiff affirming that the Templars had thrown down a fence in Clayton, to the injury of the free tenement, and that thereby cattle had obtained entry into the plaintiff's field and trampled down his corn. A verdict was given for the plaintiff." On a later occasion (10 Edward I.) the Master of the Knights Templars in England was a plaintiff in a similar case, suing Richard de Bromley for depasturing cattle "on the growing corn of the Knights at Kel," and doing damage to the value of 100 shillings. There is ground for believing that the Knights Templars also had a house at Burton.

The Cathedral Builders: Roger de Clinton and Walter Langton.

THE noble fabric of Lichfield Cathedral, reared during the greatest period of English architecture, owes its existence to the energies of several of the more notable of the mediæval bishops. Of the building which Roger de Clinton (Bishop from 1128 to 1153) erected in place of the ancient Mercian church which he had taken down, probably little remained in the finished cathedral of the fourteenth century; yet the great work which this munificent ecclesiastic accomplished for Lichfield cannot be passed over in silence. He found Lichfield a miserable village, its episcopate a heritage of poverty and abstinence, and its cathedral a humble Saxon church, and he left it a fortified city, with a new cathedral and an enriched episcopate; he is also said to have appointed the first canons, and to have increased the number of prebendaries. The main body of the present cathedral was probably erected during the middle portion of the thirteenth century. Probably the work of rebuilding was begun with the substitution of new transepts for their Norman predecessors about 1220; and the erection of the present nave dates from about 1250. For the rebuilding of the cathedral King Henry III., in 1235, granted to the dean and chapter a license to dig stone out of the Forest of Hopwas, which then extended almost to Lichfield; and the place from which this material was excavated is still known by the name of Quarry Hills.

Thus, bit by bit, the fair cathedral, the perfect flower of mediæval art, arose out of the ruins of the simpler and more austere fabric which had been reared by Roger de Clinton; but the culminating features, the exquisite lady-chapel and the unique crown of the triple spires belong to the episcopate of Walter Langton,—the most notable of the mediæval bishops of Lichfield—and to that of his successor, Roger de Norbury.

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL, FROM THE SOUTH.

The story of Walter Langton, who has been styled the second founder of the cathedral, is one which cannot well be omitted from a series of historic studies of the County of Stafford. He was, it is said, a native of Langton, near Market Harborough, and was a nephew of William Langton, Dean of York. He began life as a poor man, but having become a clerk in the King's chancery, he appears at an early period of his career to have gained the favour of the King, Edward I. In 1290, he was clerk, or, as he is otherwise described, treasurer, of the King's wardrobe, and had already become a man of substance, if not of affluence, as in that year he obtained license to impark his wood at Ashley, and a grant of twelve adjoining acres in the forest of Rockingham. For a short period he was even custodian of the great seal, between the death of his patron, Bishop Burnell, and the appointment of his namesake, John Langton, to the Chancellorship.

During the greater part of his career, however, he held the important post of Lord High Treasurer of England, and earned for himself the respect of good men by his firm discipline, which was exercised impartially toward prince and peasant. He fearlessly censured the Prince of Wales (afterwards Edward II.) for his extravagance, and in retaliation the prince broke into his park and killed his deer. The King espoused the cause of his treasurer, and thus sowed the seed of long and bitter hatred between the future Edward II. and Langton.

Walter Langton was elected to the See of Lichfield in 1297, and he was consecrated by Cardinal De Goth, one of the papal legates, on the 23rd of December in the same year. He still retained the office of treasurer, and although the shafts of malicious slander were aimed at him, and led to his temporary suspension from his sacred office, the King still reposed the firmest confidence in him, and Archbishop Winchelsea, after a long investigation, was forced to declare his innocency of the charges which had been brought against him. Edward further testified his conviction of Langton's trustworthiness by making him the chief executor of his will; and we find him entrusted with various important commissions and negotiations. For instance, he was sent with the Earl of Lincoln and Hugh Le Despenser on an embassy to the new Pope, Clement V., and was present at Clement's coronation; he was appointed joint-warden of the realm with the Archbishop of York during the King's absence in Scotland, in 1306, and was deputed by Edward to open the parliament at Carlisle. He was indeed the chief confidant of the King, and virtually his first minister. He was probably present at Edward's death, and accompanied the mournful cortege on its progress from the Scottish border to Waltham.

And now began Langton's real troubles. The hatred of the new King for his father's treasurer was only equalled by that entertained towards Langton by the King's favourite, Piers Gaveston; and the latter returning from exile, added fuel to the fire of Edward's enmity, so that he caused Langton to be arrested, while he was in the act of arranging for the

THE LADY CHAPEL, LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL.

funeral of his royal master at Westminster. He was thrown into the Tower, removed from the treasurership, and despoiled of his lands by the King. A vast hoard of treasure, amounting, it is said, to fifty thousand pounds of silver, besides gold and jewels, which was stored in the New Temple, was also seized by the King and given, for the most part, to Gaveston. Langton was taken to Windsor for trial, and afterwards sent back to the Tower in the custody of the royal favourite, who appointed gaolers to watch over him. He was thereupon carried from one prison to another, chiefly the dungeons of various castles, and finally lodged in the King's prison at York. His incarceration gave great displeasure to the ecclesiastical authorities, and frequent intercession was made for his release, but in vain. Even the Pope, Clement V., vainly urged Edward to set him at liberty, on the grounds of the contempt which was manifested toward clerical privilege by his continued imprisonment.

It was not until Langton showed himself capable of rendering valuable service to the King that he was set at liberty, in 1312. He was soon afterwards restored to his old office of Lord High Treasurer, which he thereafter held for a brief period, during the stormiest part of Edward's reign, in which the King's favourite, Piers Gaveston, fell under the headsman's axe. In 1315, Walter Langton shook off the cares of state—poorer by £20,000 than when he had entered upon the service of the crown—and during the remaining years of his life devoted himself wholly to the affairs of his diocese. He was still a wealthy man, and he gave largely of his store for the completion and enrichment of his cathedral. While yet he was busy in the affairs of the realm, he had begun the building of the lady-chapel. He also built a wall round the close, for "the honour of God, the dignity of the cathedral, and the bodies of the saints there reposing, and also for the security and quiet of the canons."

Not content with having enclosed the cathedral precincts, Langton also built for himself a splendid palace within the close, containing, among other notable apartments, a great hall, one hundred feet long and fifty-six broad, decorated with rich frescoes, depicting the coronation, marriage, wars, and funeral of his royal patron, Edward I. This sumptuous building was destroyed during the Civil War, together with much of the domestic architecture of the close, which owed so much to the munificence of Walter Langton. One of the gates of the close, that on the western side, remained until 1800, when it was removed in order to widen the road into the close.

Langton's munificence did not end with the building of the Episcopal Palace. He built houses for the vicars, repaired and improved Eccleshall Castle and his London palace in the Strand; he built the great bridge over the Minster Pool; he gave a shrine of sumptuous workmanship for the better preservation of the bones of St. Chad, and a jewelled cross of gold and costly vestments for the high altar; and bequeathed a large sum of money to be used by his successor (Bishop Norbury), for the completion of the Lady Chapel and other works for the beautifying of his beloved cathedral. The three spires (referred to by Leland as "three stone pyramids,") were built during the episcopate of Norbury, but it is not improbable that their erection was largely due to the ample fund which Langton had left for the completion of the cathedral.

Walter Langton, who stands out as the most famous of the many notable mediæval bishops of Lichfield, died at his palace in London, on the 9th of November, 1321, and was brought down to Lichfield, and there buried, in great state, in the lady-chapel which he had built. His remains were covered by a tomb of Derbyshire stone, bearing an effigy, which, although somewhat mutilated, still remains to tell of the greatness of the royal favourite, whose greatest monument, after all, is the fair cathedral which owes so much to his loving care.

The Barons of Chartley.

AMONG the multitude of nobles and fighting adventurers from Normandy, who shared in the spoils of the Conquest and whose names became renowned in after years from territorial rank or prowess in arms, few names have greater attraction for the Midlander than that of Ferrers, Lords of the Castle of Tutbury—the gift of the Conqueror to his companion-in-arms, Henry Ferrers—and owning innumerable lordships in fourteen English counties, the family became connected collaterally with the Mercian Earls, the Norman Earls of Chester, the Verduns, and the Plantagenets, possessors of the castle of Chartley and barons of that stronghold.

A TOWER OF CHARTLEY CASTLE.

Foremost among the Crusaders and prominent in the Barons' wars were the members of this illustrious family. They were founders of Tutbury Priory and various Abbeys and Priories in other shires. They held important offices in the State, and were allied with the great Midland families of the Marmions, Hillarys, Dymokes, and Frevilles, and eventually owners of Marmion's fortress of Tamworth. The annals of chivalry yield no greater or more enduring name than that of Ferrers.

Henry Ferrers, the son of Walkelin, Lord St. Hilaire in Normandy, is traditionally said to have held the post of equine controller of the Duke's army, a kind of *veterinarius*, but the name and emblazonment of six horseshoes in his coat of arms had probably a more remote origin. He had his principal seat at the Castle of Tutbury, in which place he founded a Benedictine Priory. He was also one of the Domesday Commissioners for the Midlands. In 1138 his son Robert led the forces of Derbyshire at the victorious battle of the Standard, whereupon he was created Earl of Derby by King Stephen. His daughter was the first wife of Bertram de Verdun, the Lord of Alveton, now famous as Alton, and who late in life founded the Abbey of Croxden.

The first Earl was succeeded in 1139 by his son, another Robert, who founded several abbeys, in one of which, the Cistercian Abbey of Merevale, founded in 1148, he directed his body to be buried, wrapped in an oxhide.

The Earldom was in 1165 held by his son William, whose son Robert succeeded him before 1173, in which year he was one of the leaders of the rebellion against Henry II. During this struggle the Castle of Tutbury was besieged, and upon the failure of the rebellion the Earl surrendered it to the King, and it was subsequently destroyed.

By some of our historians Robert is said to have been killed the 21st October, 1190, during the prolonged siege of Acre, and that his successor was William, who survived unti 1246. Other authorities, and particularly Dugdale,* bring in an intermediary holder of the earldom between Robert and William, who is said to have also borne the name of William. This alleged intermediary earl, they affirm, held the title after the accession of Richard I., who gave Tutbury to his brother (afterwards King John), but that the next year William being restored to favour went with King Richard to Palestine, and was there slain in 1091.

William Ferrers, his successor (the sixth Earl according to Dugdale), the first Ferrers who possessed Chartley, occupied a prominent position in the history of his time. Upon the sudden and unexpected return of King Richard, in 1194, he became commander of his forces, and with Ranulph,

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* "Dugdale's Warwickshire," Merevale.

Earl of Chester—whose sister Agnes he married—besieged and captured the Castle of Nottingham. These two Earls were constant companions-in-arms throughout the reigns of Richard and John. They were in attendance upon the latter King when he died at Newark-on-Trent, and were witnesses to his will in October, 1216. After successfully seating Henry III. upon the throne they journeyed together to the Holy Land, and upon their return Earl Ranulph built Chartley Castle and, according to Leland,* lay there whilst building his Abbey Dieu-la-cres.

The site of the castle is an admirable one, standing upon a mound midway between the ancient towns of Stafford and Uttoxeter—seven miles from each—and about thirteen from Tutbury Castle. Its great strength is yet shown in its ruined towers, which have so long defied the fell hand of Time. The fortress came into the hands of Earl William's wife upon the death of Earl Ranulph in 1231.

Earl William, after a married life of 55 years, died of gout in 1246, his wife dying the same month. His son and successor, William, having married a daughter of the Earl of Pembroke, and having seven daughters, became a widower; he was re-married to a daughter of the Earl of Winchelsea, Roger de Quincy; and his father-in-law, de Quincy, also left a widower, married Earl William's youngest daughter, whereby he became also his son-in-law.

This Earl died in 1254, and was buried in Merevale Abbey. Matthew Paris, in his "English Chronicle," says:—

> "This noble had, from his earliest years, laboured under an infirmity in his feet called the gout, as his father had before him, and from whom he inherited it as it were. He was usually carried from place to place in a litter or a carriage. One day, as he was proceeding on his journey, his servants, through careless driving, allowed his carriage to be upset on a bridge, and although he escaped with his life at the time, he was never properly sound in body afterwards, and soon after went the way of all flesh."

By his second wife Earl Ferrers acquired the lordship of Groby, thus founding the family of Ferrers and Grey of Groby, of which line were the Marquesses of Dorset, Lady Jane Grey, and the Earls of Stamford.

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* "Chartley, the olde Castell, is now in ruine, but old yerle Randol, as sum say, lay in it when he builded Deu l' encres Abbay. This castel standeth a good flite shot from the building and goodly manor place that now is ther as the principal house of the Ferrers, and cam to them be similitude by marriage. Ther is a mighte large parke."—*Leland.*

The active and eventful life of Robert the last Earl of Derby is writ large in the chronicles of the period. Although but thirteen at his father's death the crown acquired his wardship by purchase, and he was married in 1249 at the age of eight to the king's niece, a seven-year-old bride. His child wife, however, died young and childless, whereupon Earl Robert married a daughter of Ralph Basset of Drayton, and with his brother-in-law, the first Lord Basset, he played a prominent part in the great struggle of the Barons against the evil government, misrule, and corruption of Henry III., a struggle in defence of the principles of the Great Charter, and when Simon de Montfort, the one brave man capable of arousing the enthusiasm of the English Barons arose, Basset and Ferrers were foremost in rallying to his standard.

The great struggle which ensued was most disastrous to Staffordshire. The leaders were Midland barons and nearly all the fighting men of the shire were enrolled in their forces. It is true the Baron of Dudley, Marmion of Tamworth, the Ardernes of Cnotton and Cherlton, the Oakovers and a few others sided with the King. They were, however, subjected to all the evils of civil war. Their houses were pillaged and burnt, and woods and crops destroyed by armed men, and for the time the law became powerless and was suspended.

In the early days of the struggle, in 1263, Earl Robert attacked Worcester, demolished the Jewry, and destroyed the King's Park. In retaliation the Prince Edward entered Staffordshire with his army and mercilessly devastated with fire and sword all the Earl's lands, and once again the Castle of Tutbury was destroyed.

The Earl shared in Montfort's victory at Lewes, and he was probably also present at Evesham battle, August 1st, 1265, when Ralph Basset and many local fighting men fell with Simon de Montfort. Ferrers, however, either at Evesham or elsewhere, was taken prisoner, but eventually set at liberty, and subject to special and arbitrary precautions against future disloyalty, fully pardoned.

Regardless, however, of all consequences, Earl Robert speedily rejoined his broken party, and made a brave but futile attempt to retrieve its losses.

Having raised an army he gave battle to the King's forces at Chesterfield on Whitsun Eve, 1266, but was defeated.

A curious story is told of his escape from the field of battle and taking refuge in a church. Here he lay concealed under some sacks of wool suffering from gout, as did his father and grandfather, and was entirely helpless. His hiding place was divulged by a woman, and he was again made prisoner, loaded with chains, and taken to Winchester. The terms of his former pardon were now enforced. His estates, previously conveyed to the King, by special charter, were confiscated and he was deprived of his estates, titles, and dignities, the greater portion of which were conferred upon Edmund (Crookback), the King's second son. After an imprisonment of three years Ferrers was liberated and restitution of his vast estates offered for a consideration of £50,000. This sum, however, he could not, or would not, raise, but unsuccessfully attempted their recovery by law.*

Edward I. had now ascended the throne. Robert Ferrers died shortly afterwards and his only son John, who retained Chartley as his mother's heritage, subsequently became Baron Ferrers of Chartley.

Thus ended the first Earldom of Derby, so closely interwoven with the historic events of our county. The vast territorial possessions in various counties and the ancient Castle of Tutbury, held by the Ferrers for two centuries, passed to the house of Lancaster, and henceforth the Castle of Chartley gave the family their title, and for a further period of nearly two centuries the Ferrers followed the fortune of the Plantagenets.

John Ferrers, the son of the last Earl of Derby, and the first Baron of Chartley, true to the instincts of his race, participated in the rebellion of the Earls of Hereford and Norfolk. His son Robert married a daughter of the first-named Earl, the powerful Humphry de Bohun, and succeeded his father in 1321. Like his father, Robert was an able soldier, and after serving in the Scotch wars and sharing in the glory of Cressy, died in the year 1350. His son John, the third Baron, died in 1367, and Robert, the fourth Baron, in 1413.

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* The Castle and Park of Chartley were given by the King to Hamon le Strange—who was also made Sheriff of Staffordshire. Ferrers and his followers attacked the castle, drove out the invaders, and took possession, but it was recaptured, after an obstinate resistance, by the king's forces under the new Lord of Tutbury, Edmund of Lancaster. Great complaints were laid against Le Strange and his deputy, one Leon, for abuses during his shrievalty. He was also presented by the Steward and Forester of Cannock before the Court of the Justices of the Forest in 1271 for taking a buck without warrant while passing through Teddesley in June, 1269, and conveying same to his castle of Chartley, and also for taking the same week two does in Cheslynhaye.

Edmund Ferrers, the fifth Baron, married Elena de la Roche, the heiress of several manors near Birmingham. She was grand-daughter of Thomas, Lord of Birmingham, and for many years they held the Manor of Birmingham and lived in that town, built a mansion near the ancient Manor House, and took so great an interest in the recently-founded Gild that the arms of the Ferrers's were emblazoned in a window of the Gild Hall. But after the death, in 1436, of her husband Lady Ferrers married Sir Philip Chetwynd, and the Manor was recovered from her by the male heirs of the Berminghams.

CHARTLEY, FROM THE CASTLE HILL.

The military life of Edmund was in accord with that of his ancestors, and he shared in most of the great victories of Henry V. His eldest son, William, the sixth Baron, left an only daughter, who married Walter

Devereux, through whom and whose descendants and the ancient family of Shirley, the Barony was transmitted, but the connection of those families with Chartley need not now be followed. Each has a history of its own which belong to another and a later period.

Although the romance of Chartley is anterior to the reign of the Tudors the lordly domain is still held—as it has been held for six and a half centuries—by a Ferrers. The venerable Castle has for centuries been crumbling away—but its moated defence is yet visible. From its commanding position to the west may still be seen the pools which formed the defence of the "goodly manor place," and the mansion standing upon the site of the building which Leland saw and in which Mary Queen of Scots was incarcerated.

More than a mile to the east, herds of red deer and of fallow deer still roam the "Mighte parke," and, stranger still, here may yet be found a remarkable and rare survival of the wild cattle of the old British breed, which have perpetuated their race from prehistoric times.

Robin Hood of Loxley.

UNDER the date 1189, the first year of Richard I., the Chronicle of John Stowe records:—

> In this time were many robbers and outlawes, among the which Robert Hood and little John continued in woods, despoyling and robbing the goods of the rich. The said Robert intertaineth an hundred tall men, and good archers, with such spoiles as he got, upon whom foure hundred, were they never so strong, durst not give the onset. Poore men's goods he spareth, abunda'tlie relieving them with that which he got fro' abbyes and the houses of rich earles.

For this the accepted history of Robin Hood, or Hode—as handed down from generation to generation for more than three centuries—the only history the common people thought worth preserving, we are indebted to Mair, or Major, who wrote in 1521. Grafton, Stowe, and Camden all adopted it and Robinson versified it. Major called *Robertus Hudus* "the most humane and prince of all robbers." William Shakespeare made two allusions to him; and Camden styled him "the gentlest thief that ever was."

However slight our knowledge may be of the earliest Robin Hood rhymes, the fifteenth century minstrels gave a colour to his adventures, which has been well preserved in all the folk-lore and romance which has gathered around his name.

"In somer when the shawes be sheyn,
And leves be large and long,
Hit is full mery in fayre forest
To here the foulys song.

To se the dere draw to the le,
And leve their hillis hee,
And shadow hem in the levis grene
Under the greenwood tre."

Shoreditch Public Libraries

Upon the introduction of printing, these old rhymes were seized upon by the ballad scribes, but the sixteenth and seventeenth century productions were fitting only for the pedlar's pack, although some of them may embody facts containing a germ of truth.

Robert Od, Hod, or Hode, was born at Loxley about 1160, seven years after Ranulph, Earl of Chester, was poisoned by Peverell.

The earliest known reference to Robin Hood, that of Piers Plowman, 1362, little more than a century after his death, is as follows:—

> I can (ken) noghte perfitly my pater-noster, as the prest it syngeth,
> But I can (ken) rymes of Robin Hood, and Randolf, Erle of Chestre."

This may be an accidental coupling of these names, as an ancient ballad poem of the Earls of Chester is still preserved which deals largely with Earl Ranulph, of Robin Hood's time, the grandson of the Ranulph who died 1153. It has, however, not unnaturally been inferred that rhymes in which the two names are coupled existed at that period.

Ranulph, the grandfather, was mainly instrumental in securing the reversion of the English throne to the Plantagenet claimant, afterwards Henry II., and was rewarded by a wholesale grant of Staffordshire lordships, a grant which certainly never took full effect, although, in some instances, it may have enabled the Earl to obtain possession. Among the estates given to Earl Ranulph by this abortive grant from the Norman Duke, were the whole fee (all the estates) of *Radulphus filius odonis*—the latinized form of Od or Hod—wherever the same can be found.

These estates lay dispersed about Staffordshire, with, perhaps, some few outlying upon the Shropshire border, and in Warwickshire or other counties. The Odos were then settled in Staffordshire, as were also the Bagots and Trussells. William Bagot and William Trussel married daughters of Robert Fitz Odo, and upon his death, about 1179, succeeded to the Staffordshire Estates, and also the Lordship of Lockesley in Warwickshire.

Among the least reliable traditions of Robin Hood is his claim to the Earldom of Huntingdon. In the last century the learned, but not very reliable, Dr. Stukeley, compiled a pedigree to agree with this claim of the ballad mongers, and he derived the connection through the Lincolnshire family of Kyme.*

In Robin Hood's time the Earl of Huntingdon was David St. Liz, who married Maud, daughter of Hugh, Earl of Chester, sister of Ranulph the last Earl, and sister-in-law of William Ferrers, Earl of Derby, of Tutbury and Chartley Castles.

The neighbouring village of Lockesley, or Loxley, was one of the Ferrers properties, and had been settled upon a younger son. It passed with a female descendant, about 1327, in marriage to John de Kynardesleye. At that time Loxley was woodland on the borders of Needwood forest; it is near Bagots Bromley and Bagot's park, still famous for its giant oaks of ancient growth.

But where was the Loxley in which Robin Hood was born? That it was not in Nottinghamshire has to be admitted from the simple fact that there was no Lockesley, or Loxley, in the county. That Robin's exploits were chiefly in Sherwood and in Barnsdale and other northern forests is undoubted, but that they were not confined to any shire or district is equally certain. The earliest reference connecting his name with any locality that of Wyntoun, 1420, says:—

"In Yngilwode and Barnysdale
Thai oysyd all this time thare trawale."

and in the ballads of early origin Barnsdale is as often the scene of his adventures as Sherwood, whilst Plumpton park, Cumberland, and Ingleton forest, still further north, were said to have been frequented by his band; yet none of these districts claim him as a native, possibly Loxley Chase, near Sheffield, might be shown to have such a claim, but no serious attempt appears to have been made to prove the connection.

In Harwood's notes upon Erdeswick's Survey of Staffordshire and its antiquities, referring to Loxley, near Bagot's park, Staffordshire, he says explicitly:—"Loxley was the birth-place of Robin Hood; a rambling life led him to Tutbury, not far from his birth-place, where he married a shepherdess under the poetical name of Clorinda, having been charmed by her dexterous manner of killing a buck in the forest."

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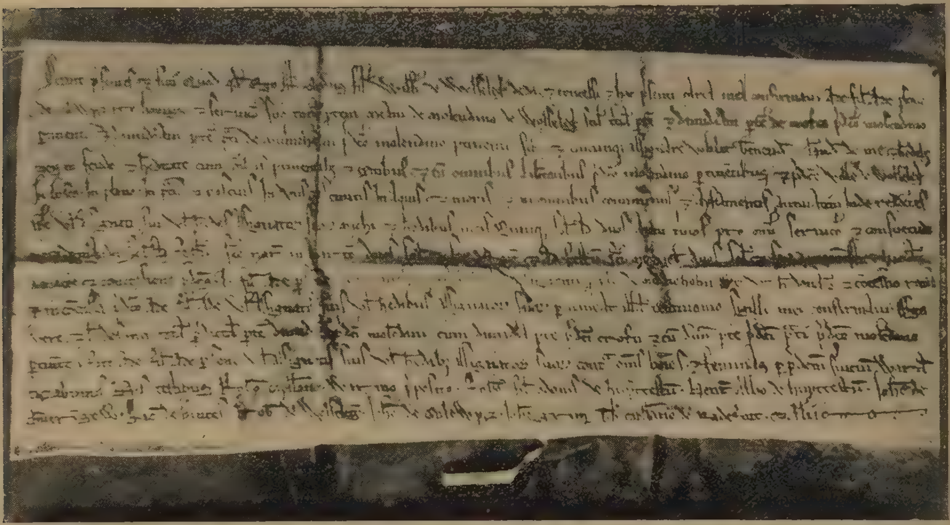
* This pedigree described by Parkin as "jocose" went back four generations for the connection by marriage with one of the family of the Earls of Huntingdon. Ritson in his investigations asserts that Stukeley gives no authority to show that the Kymes were really named Fitz Ooth or Odo, and further states that no such name has been met with elsewhere.

That the Odos lived during Robin Hood's career within three miles of Loxley, is clearly shown by a deed relating to the Mill of Wolseley, a few miles from Loxley, to which Robert *fil Odonis* is a witness.



ANCIENT DEED OF WOLSELEY, *temp.* HENRY III.

Although not dated, this deed is apparently of the early part of the third Henry's reign. It is a grant from Wolseley to Adam, son of Adam the parson of Colwyz. The witnesses are Robert the Chaplin, Henry *Prepositus*, Robert *fil Odonis*, of Huytcestri (Uttoxeter), Henry Albo—of Huytcestri, John of Ch'ntri'gew', Richard of Hintes, Robert of Wolseley, John Grim the Chaplain of Radfort, and others. Richard of Hintes was at that date joint-lord with Richard Wolseley of Wolseley Manor.

But this is not the only evidence of the Odos or Hodes living at that time in the neighbourhood. In 1258 a William Hod with Robert de Stafford and Ralph Scurry had to answer a charge of robbing, maltreating, and imprisoning one Nicholas Mal;* and thirteen years later, William Hod and two others were presented before the Justices of the Forest of Cannock having "conveyed a dead doe in a covered cart from the Haye of Teddesle to the house of William Hod, who was then dead."† This William Hod lived near Penkridge, upon the confines of the forest. Other instances could be adduced of members of the Odo family living in the neighbourhood.

Although statements in the ballad literature of Robin Hood are of little value biographically, allusion must be made to "*A new ballad of bold Robin Hood shewing his birth, breeding, valour, and marriage at Titbury, Bull-running, calculated for the meridian of Staffordshire but may serve for Derbyshire or Kent.*" The date is uncertain, evidently later than Elizabeth's reign. It is earlier than any allusion to Maid Marian; it asserts "The father of Robin a forester was," and contains the first mention of Locksley being in Nottinghamshire. It has many allusions to Staffordshire, it assumes that Sherwood and Tutbury lie near together; it details a fight near Tutbury, Sir Roger the parson hies from Dubbridge (Doveridge),‡ and the writer who says:—"I'm the King of the Fidlers," is evidently familiar with the minstrelsy and the inevitable fight which invariably accompanied the bull-running.

Upon the whole the ballad may be of doubtful value in connecting Robin Hood with Staffordshire, but it shows the weak origin of the statement that Locksley is a village of Notts.

It is needless to refer in detail to the numerous survivals in the county of Robin Hood's Wells, Robin Hood's Butts, and other places traditionally connected with the great outlaw. Such names exist throughout England; but it may be pointed out that at Elford, Burton, Locksley, and Ludchurch, the name remains in localities which, in the thirteenth century, were likely to attract the Prince of Robbers.

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* Salt Society's Staffordshire Collections vol. 4, p. 136; † Ibid., vol. 5, part 1, p. 148.

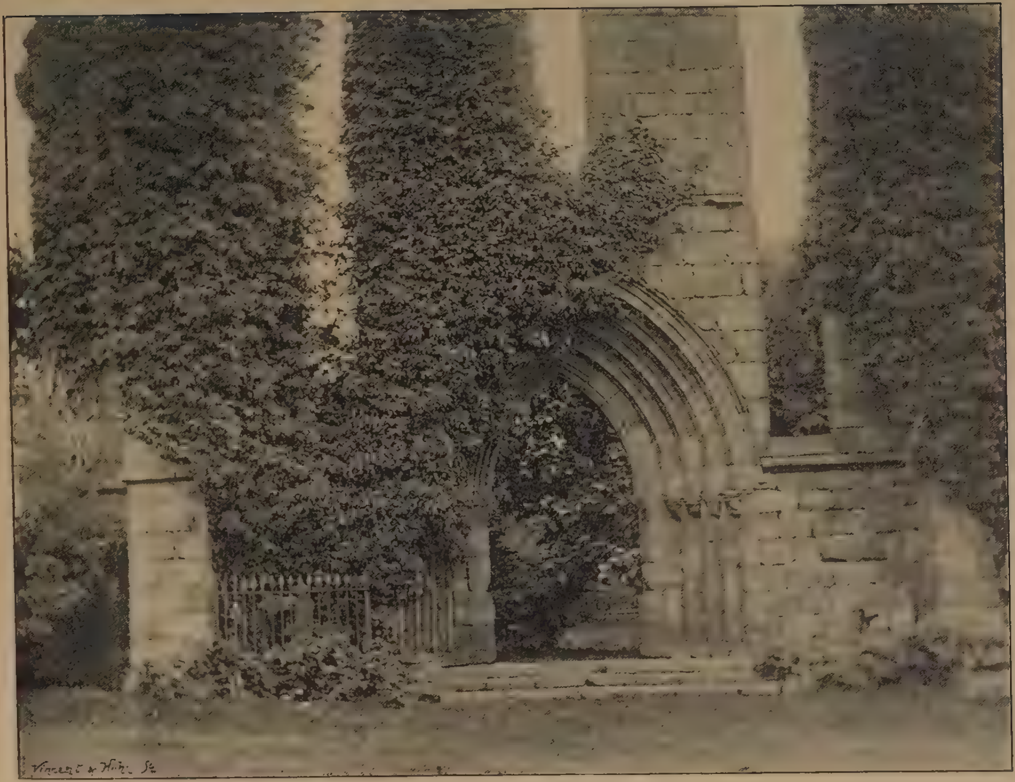
‡ This is a very remarkable allusion, Doveridge although in Derbyshire is close to Uttoxeter, where members of the Odo or Hod family lived.

Croxden Abbey and its Founder.

WITH its five abbeys, ten priories or cells, and four nunneries, besides its venerable cathedral and six collegiate churches, Staffordshire was, in former times, bountifully endowed with monuments of the religious fervour of its Saxon and Norman nobles. Among the ruined abbeys of the county there exists no better preserved relic of early architecture than the great west doorway of the Cistercian Abbey of Croxden. The reason for this is not far to seek. Within about a mile of its walls is the quarry of Hollington, yet famous for the durability of its stone; and although this, the principal entrance, is apparently of later date than the foundation of the Abbey, the perfect preservation of stonework so ancient can scarcely be equalled.

The Abbey stands between the Churnet and the Blyth, near to a streamlet called the Peake, two miles distant from the old Castle of the Verduns at Alveton, or Alton, and about three miles from Rocester, where an Abbey of Black Monks had already existed from 1146. An old doggerel rhyme not of early date, thus records the founding of Croxden Abbey:

"Bertram, son of the Norman Verdun,
Founded the ancient Abbey of Croxden,
When Henry the Second was England's King
He did perform this very great thing;
In the year one thousand one hundred and seventy-six
Upon this great work his mind he did fix;
He dedicated it unto Sainte Mary,
Of the order of Bernardine monks to be.
One hundred pounds six shillings and sevenpence
In lands he gave for its defence,
Besides many other great gifts given
By persons devout for to gain Heaven."



CROXDEN ABBEY : THE WEST FRONT.

HO[illegible] PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Bertram, Baron Verdun, the founder of Croxden, was the son of Norman de Verdun and Laceline de Clinton, and was twice married, first to Maud de Ferrers, and afterwards to Rohese, or Rose, of a family unknown. Whether Verdun obtained Alveton from Henry II. for his great services (unlike many barons in these parts he remained faithful to that king), or by one of his marriages, is not certain, nor is it material. In the year 1176 he gave to the monks of Aulney, in Normandy, a piece of land in Chotes, or Chotene (probably Cotton) to build a Cistercian Abbey in the Vale of St. Mary (still called Maryvale); three years afterwards it was removed to Croxden, and became the burying-place of the Verdun family.

Bertram de Verdun joined with Ferrers, Earl of Derby, and other Midland barons, in the prolonged crusade at the close of the reign of Henry II., and but few of them returned again to their native land. In 1191 Acre fell before the forces of Richard I., and Bertram was appointed governor of the city, but died at Joppa in the following year. The barony fell a century later, but the holders of the title were not closely connected with the county, although the Audleys, or Alditheleys, the Ipstones, the Stanley's, Earls of Derby, and other families, were younger branches of the Verdun family.

As to the history of Croxden Abbey, little is preserved beyond dry details from charters; one monk of the Abbey, however, William de Shepesheved, wrote a chronicle from the Conquest to 1374. The one incident worthy of special note is that of the burial here of the heart of King John. The King had taken a fever at Swineshead Abbey in Lincolnshire, and died at Newark on the 19th of October, 1216. His physician was the Abbot of Croxton, in Leicestershire; by him the body was disembowelled (probably as a measure of preservation, as the King had, in his will,* directed that he should be buried before the High Altar in Worcester Cathedral), and the bowels were interred at Croxton Abbey. The heart of the monarch whom few sincerely mourned, was carried to the Staffordshire Abbey of Croxden, and there interred, near to the last resting-place of the Verduns, who had been faithful in their allegiance to his father, Henry II.

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* For a copy of this will, see "Historic Worcestershire," by W. Salt Brassington, F.S.A., page 193.

The special preservation and separate interment of the human heart was not at one period an uncommon custom. Richard I. bequeathed his heart to a Norman monastery; Edward I., and Robert Bruce, both bequeathed their hearts to the Holy Land; and, nearer home, Ranulph, Earl of Chester, by testamentary deed, bequeathed his heart to the Abbey Dieu-la-Cres, which he had founded; and so late as the last century the poetaster, Paul Whitehead, bequeathed his heart to his patron, Lord le Despencer, to be buried in his mausoleum at West Wycombe.

The Cistercian or Bernardine monks, like the Cluniacs, a reformed order of the Benedictines or Black monks, not only differed from the older body in dress, but in several other respects. The Black monks sought to reclaim the marsh, and their houses were, as at Burton, Tutbury, and Rocester, near the river and the flood; the attention of the White monks was directed to reclaim the moor and the mountain valley, and when at the general dissolution of the Abbeys the white-frocked monks were dispersed, the territory around the Abbeys of Croxden and Dieu-la-Cres, in the three centuries of their existence, had been transformed from a condition of barrenness into lovely and fertile districts, and under their fostering care had become rich and productive.

Thomas Chawney, the last of Croxden's Abbots, had, however, to yield up the Abbey, its goods, and possessions. The lead was speedily stripped from the roofs of the sacred and beautiful building, and converted into ready money, as was also the case at Burton, Dudley, Dieu-la-Cres, Rocester, Tutbury, Stafford, and many other places. Then followed a ruthless dismantling, a merciless spoliation, unequalled even in the worst days of Cromwell's soldiery,* and then the Abbey, its cultivated farms, and

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* In the Scudamore accounts in the British Museum is the following:—Crokesden.—The Salez ther made the xvth day of October, anno xxx^{o} regis Henrici viij^{vi}, as herafter followyth:—

Item, a lytle gatehouse on the north syde of the comyn wey, sold to Mr. Bassett	xiij$^{s.}$	iiij$^{d.}$
Item, sold to Mr. Basset, the loft under the organs	x$^{s.}$	
Item, sold to Mr. Basset, the lytle smythes forge	iiij$^{s.}$	viij$^{d.}$
Item, the bott of an asshe, sold		xx$^{d.}$
Item, the roffe of the Churche, sold to Sir Thomas Gylbert and Edmund Wetheryns, of Chelveley parysshe	vj$^{li.}$	
Item, the roffe of the dorter, [? *dormitory*] sold to Mr. Bassett	xxxiij$^{s.}$	iiij$^{d.}$
Item, sold to Johan Ferne, all the old tymber in the cloyster	vj$^{s.}$	viij$^{d.}$

productive lands were all passed to one Foljamb, of Walton, and by him were bequeathed to his base-born son, who speedily sold all his father had left him.

Among the Cistercian Abbeys thus despoiled, amounting to about one hundred, were those of Furness, Fountains, Rievaulx, Tintern, Melrose, Vale Crucis, and Llanthony, and with the effective means adopted to promote ruin and decay it is a marvel that so much remains at this time to attest the good work of the Abbey builders. At Croxden, not only is the Gothic arch and west front wall, 40 feet high, still standing, but many of the walls of the south transept, the cloisters and the chapter-house also remain. They are of considerable height and of great stability, and for a long time to come are likely to remain picturesque and imposing ruins of the great Abbey.

CROXDEN ABBEY, LOOKING NORTH.

ALREWAS CHURCH.

Alrewas and its Ancient Manorial Customs.

THE fascination which attaches to any observation of the social life and customs of a past age justifies the turning aside from the general purpose of this work to glance at the local customs and the powers and privileges of the lord of a Staffordshire manor in the middle ages.

Alrewas, or Alder Water, on the banks of the Trent, is one of those extensive lordships or townships lying around a primitive village in which changes have been slow, and the history of a thousand years may yet be read in its waters, its roads, and its commons. But even a thousand years ago Alrewas was a place of great antiquity. Centuries before the Roman generals passed and repassed with their forces along its great highway the neighbourhood of Alrewas was occupied by the primeval races of the Midlands, and the existence of one of the great Salt ways from Cheshire through King's

Bromley and over Salter's Bridge to the Lincoln coast attests beyond a doubt the traffic of pre-Roman times.

Alrewas was one of the earliest settlements on the Engle forming the Central Kingdom. Its peculiar position between the Trent and Tame, and upon the two well-used ancient water-ways, with such facts as have come to light of its pre-Norman history places this beyond contention. Many ancient records are preserved which, whilst illustrating the peculiar features of the Manor after the Conquest, incidentally touch upon facts of a much earlier period. Long before the Conquest it was a possession of the family of Leofric, to whose Tun or Ham of Bromley it immediately adjoined ; but at the date of Domesday it was in the King's hands, having a priest and some twenty-seven land-holding tenants, whose families, and the families of servants and helpers (non-landholders), would make a scattered population of nearly 300 souls. A church had certainly existed in the place from the year 822.

The lordship remained in the hands of the crown until 1203, when it was granted by King John to Roger Somerville, Knight, to one of whose descendants—Sir Philip Somerville,—in 1342, was deputed the curious and interesting task of recording in writing the ancient customs of the Manor. The necessity for this duty arose out of the various dissensions arising between the manorial steward and bailiff and the tenants of the base tenure of the manor. Therefore "to avoid the danger of the souls of both parties," Sir Philip, having at that date governed the lordship for the space of forty years, "and having more knowledge of the certainty of the customs belonging to the tenants than any other man now living," hath at the tenants' requirement, caused "all the customs and services in the time the manor was in the hands of the King of this realm, to be put in writing and be registered."

This record is of sufficient interest to justify our dwelling upon it at some length. It sets forth that Sir Philip's great grandfather, about the time of King Henry III., the 26th of his reign (1241-2) did often vex and trouble his tenants, who at length did get forth the King's writ of Montra Vite (*Monstraverunt*), and process ran till trial made. The services and customs found by this Inquest are then very fully recorded.

Before referring to these it should be mentioned that incidental to these disputes extracts from ancient records were procured and preserved. One of these has a special interest, as it may not improbably be a survival of the supplementary papers connected with the returns made upon the Domesday Survey, preserved with the original Grant of the Manor to Sir Roger Somerville in 1203. That it could have been a forgery made by Sir Philip, or one of his ancestors, in order to deceive the tenants of the manor seems in the highest degree improbable. It runs as follows:—

"A true copy of what is expressed in the Booke of Doomesday as followeth:—

"Doomesday de Alrewas in Oflow Hundred.

"In the time of William Bastard King it is thus written in the Booke of Doomsday:—

"And that the same Algarius, whilst he held the Lords Mannour was Earl of Lyndocolne, who dying without Heirs the Lords Mannour came by Escheate into the hands of Allured King of England because that it first was of the Crown of England and ought not to be separated from it and hath so succeeded always and was in the hands of the King till the times of King John the brother of King Richard who in the fifth year of his Reign gave the Mannour to Roger of Sommerville, Knight, and Lord of Witchnor, to fee farm," etc., etc.

Accepting this record as genuine—and it certainly was so accepted in 1342 (15 Ed. III.)—the remarkable fact is shown that Algar, the Ældorman of Lincoln, who figures so prominently in the life of Alfred the Great, and who won the admiration of the West Saxons by his bravery against the Danes in 869, was the Lord of the Estate adjoining Bromley, in later ages held by Leofric and his son Algar.

The descriptions, services, and customs shown by the proceedings of 26 Henry III., and again of 15 Ed. III., are of a peculiar character. The cottages of Domesday are called Buddels or Vicdels; the free tenants were of two kinds, those holding by charter and those of ancient time, or free sockmen. Increase of rent was obtained by alienating divers ways, and for new land converting the demesne lands of the lord into open fields for the tenants, among these Brom-holme being specially mentioned.

Upon the death of a tenant the lord took the best ox, or horse, and the Church the next best, and the method of division in case no ox or horse was left was most intricate—of kyne, heifers, or bullocks the lord shall ever have the best, the Church the next—if a calf only it was divided, if two mares the lord and the Church have them equally, but never to take hog nor goat, mutton nor sheep, but they shall take the tenant's best uppermost coat betwixt them.

But the case of the tenant of base tenure was especially oppressive. All his male horses, and his bees, except the best which ought to remain with the ground, went to the lord, also his bacons, and whole webb, dyed or coloured, but of webb not coloured, or if part coloured, or part cut or sold, unless after the beginning of the sickness of the tenant in fraud of the lord, nothing.

C. E. Weale, *Tamworth.*

BROMLEY MANOR.

For merchett of their daughters, viz., a licence to marry, to pay two shillings, or a bullock, whose eares and hornes be of the same length. Widows not to marry without licence of the bailiff, and if any of them do then shall she lose the land.

For every horse they sell, to pay fourpence, and for every colt twopence.

For pannage or mast (the right to turn his hogs into the woods), every tenth hog, or pay at the rate of a penny each hog yearly.

The tenants by base tenure moreover had to mow one meadow lying within Trent, and shall have one mutton, *at which they shall run* if the bailiff will, or twelve pence, but the tenants shall cock the same hay.

The child of a deceased tenant to have his land at age of fifteen, and pay the lord's fine at will of lord or steward, as little and measurable as they can agree, but the law of God and the custom of the land will that the fine be seized after a reasonable rate, for hitherto no fine hath exceeded one mark of silver for one yard land (about fourpence the acre).

The base tenure tenants could not set their children to school without the lord's leave, but the free sockmen were not so restricted and might set their sons to school or holy orders.

Tenants of yard land, etc., shall fish in the waters of Trent, Tame, Mease, Marebrook, or Pipebrook, with an engine called a strike, three days in the week for their own table without selling.

Another custom, which seems to refer only to the death of a free sockman, gave to the lord—with the best horse—the saddle and bridle with his sword, or else his best garment, sword, spear, bow, or ax which he used to bear.

The eldest son was heir, and, if no son, eldest daughter, to exclusion of the younger.

In 1342 the ancient spelling, "Alderwas," heads a List of Tenants, among whom were Sir John Arden, Kt., Sir John Stafford, Kt., Roger Hillary, Kt., and Sir John Treyford, Kt.; among the Sockmen, John de Walton, and among the Villani, Villaines, or Farmers, Dynott, Alwyn, le Baxter, le Woodward, le Reve, Sylvester Adam, Chaplaine, Gilbert at ye Mill, Christian the Roper, Richard the Prest, etc. The manor then comprised—besides Alrewas—Curburrow Somerville, Curburrow Thornes, Frodley, Orgreave, Edingale; whilst, later, Frauncis End, Milne End, Hie Cross End, and Gaywood End were included.

In a Rental of 1510 the Prioress of Fayswall held Curborrough Sommerveyle, and saith prayers yearly for them that dye, every year, and pays two strikes of bread corne to be made into bread and given to the poor, for the souls of Phillip Sommervyle, Knight, and Margaret Halx, his wife, and their ancestors.

The waters of Trent and Tame were let in various lengths, and among the defined boundaries were Burlake Head, Long lake, Acres holme, Milne ford, Dome water, King's bridge, Brethel holme, Milne Stone ford, and Clerks holme, on the Trent, and ye holme near Pollfrogg, Salters Bridge, and to Trent, on the Tame, and Sir Henry Vernon pays 24 Gallinas for Fishing of the Meise.

C. E. Weale, *Tamworth.*

THE TRENT, NEAR ALREWAS.

A peculiar illustration of early tenure is recorded. Isabel, which was the Wife of William Orlyd, held in Stafford 3 parts of 1 Burgage in Eastgate

Street, and William Sturney the remainder, and pays 4d., and that the Reve of the Manor of Alrewas shall every year receive the Hospitality freely with the Tennants of the same upon the tenements. In connection with this ancient tenure is the statement that "If there be a general riseing in England, ye said Lord of the Mannour of Alrewas shall keep four cornels of ye wall of the town of Stafford for the safety of the Town of our lord the King, four days at the charges of the Town of Stafford."

Alrewas is now an attractive and popular haunt of the modern followers of rare Isaak Walton, but it would scarcely be possible to find another manor in the county which, at the time Henry VIII. became King, had preserved so severely the habits and customs existing when the Saxon Algar owned the Manor and lived on its borders, and even at the present time the early place-names are with but slight variation still preserved.

WOODEN BRIDGE OVER TRENT.

DRAYTON BASSET *(from Shaw's "Staffordshire.")*

Basset of Drayton.

DRAYTON Manor has so long been associated with the memory of the great Prime Minister of the earlier years of Victoria's reign, and that of his father, the first Sir Robert Peel, that its early historic fame as the home of the powerful Basset family is somewhat obscured. But the little unpretending village of Drayton, which in the heyday of the great statesman's fame was visited by the Sovereign of the Realm and the Czar of all the Russias, as well as by statesmen, generals, scholars, and men of every rank, boasts an antiquity reaching back beyond the days when Cæsar's legions first trod British soil. Its name, which is of Celtic derivation, and its position upon the Watling Street and on the borderland of the forest of Cannock and the chase of Sutton, attest its occupation in British, Roman, and Saxon times.

Drayton was one of the possessions of Leofric, and passed to his grandson Edwine. When the Norman gained an assured footing in England, and rewarded his followers with the spoils of the vanquished, he divided the Manor of Drayton between Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, and Turstine de Basset.* The former gave his moiety as a dowry with his daughter Geva, on her marriage with Geoffrey Ridel, a justice of England, who perished in the ill-fated "White Ship," in 1119, with the two royal princes.

Among the pious acts perpetuating the memory of Geva Ridel was the founding, at a great age, of a priory of Benedictine Monks at Canwell, fronting the great northern road through Coleshill and Lichfield. This foundation was attached by Cardinal Wolsey, 1526. The estate was purchased by Bishop Vesey, and passed eventually to the Lawley family—Lord Wenlock. An ancient well on the site bore the name of S. Modwen's Well; it was reputed to possess miraculous properties of healing. It may be that the fame of this well led to the choice of the site for the priory.

By the marriage of Geoffrey Ridel's daughter, Maud, with Richard Basset, the two portions of the manor of Drayton became re-united in the hands of the Basset family, whose name has been linked with that of the manor ever since.† Ralph Basset, the father of Richard, was a lawyer of great eminence, exalted position, and vast wealth. He is said to have owed his elevation from a lowly condition to the favour of Henry I., but his own great ability doubtless had much to do with his success, and this he seems to have transmitted to his son, who became a justice of England.

Two generations later, we find Ralph Basset, the grandson of Richard, enclosing a deer park out of Sutton Chase, the hunting place of the Saxon kings, and long the possession of the Earls of Warwick. To this Waleran de Newburgh, the earl, strenuously objected, but cried quits on Ralph agreeing to send him two good bucks yearly to Sutton, keep good his fences, and have no buckstalls.* Thirty years later, Waleran's grandson, Thomas, Earl of Warwick, was forcibly prevented by Ralph Basset from hunting with dogs in Drayton Chase, but so thoroughly had Basset made good his right to a deer park that he obtained no redress.

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* This was the view taken by Dugdale and Erdeswick, based on the entry in the Staffordshire section of Domesday. A correspondent of the Rev. R. W. Eyton, in a letter printed in the addenda of his *Domesday Studies*, clearly shows, however, that the entry in the Staffordshire section is an erroneous copy of another entry in the Oxfordshire section, the real name of the holder being Turchil (the ancestor of the Ardens) and not Turstin, and the Drayton referred to being in Oxfordshire. On this hypothesis we must assume that the whole of the Drayton, afterwards known as Drayton Basset, passed to Hugh Lupus, and through his daughter Geva to her daughter Maud, and that the first Basset of Drayton was the Richard who married the granddaughter of the Earl of Chester.

† See note above.

The civil dissensions of Henry the Third's reign, culminating in the rising of the barons, with Simon de Montfort at their head, brought great trouble to this neighbourhood. Ralph, the first Lord Basset, Lord Ferrers, and other Staffordshire barons (as already recorded in our chapter on the Barons of Chartley) ranged themselves under the standard of De Montfort, and Lord Basset held Bridgnorth Castle for his party, but his father-in-law, Baron Somery of Dudley, espoused the king's cause. Each side retained a force of hirelings, mostly Welshmen. In 1259, one William Leminstre and others forcibly bound and took a villain from Somery's manor of Sedgley, and imprisoned him at Bridgnorth. In 1261, this Leminstre was in the service of Basset, but the next year had changed sides, and transferred his services to Philip Marmion, of the king's party, against whom Ralph sought redress "for sending his servant, William Leminstre, with a great multitude of outlaws and Welshmen; for breaking open his mill, destroying the mill pool, and carrying away the flour to Tamworth Castle."†

Subsequently it was shown that the neighbourhood had been disturbed by a multitude of Welshmen and others retained by Marmion and Basset, but it was arranged that they should find security not to maintain such men in future.

The district, however, still continued to be a hotbed of civil contention until the battle of Evesham, August 5th, 1265, in which the Barons were defeated. At this battle Ralph Basset was slain, scorning to save himself by flight. Matthew Paris tells us in his Chronicle that Simon de Montfort "urged Hugh Despenser, Ralph Basset, and others, to fly and save themselves for better times; but they all refused to leave him, 'they would not live if he died.'"*

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* "A buckstall is defined by Cowel as 'a deer-hay ('hay' meaning enclosure), toil, or great net to catch deer with;' it might be used to admit wild or stray deer. . . . A statute of 19 Henry VII. enacted that 'If any personne, having no parke, chase, or forest of his owne, doth keep, or cause to bee kept, anie nettes, called deare hayes or buck stalles, he shall forfait, for every moneth that he keepeth the same, x' *li.*'"—(Notes on Birmingham Survey, 1553).

† Salt, "Staffordshire Collections," vol. iv., p. 151.

Evesham fight was followed by severe reprisals, whereby the men of Staffordshire were great sufferers. Basset's wife, Somery's daughter, was, however, treated with consideration, and her son Ralph, the second baron, retained the estates until his death in 1299. He was buried at Drayton, and the descendants of his two daughters a century later became heirs to the barony.

Ralph, third baron, who died 1343, and Ralph, the fourth and last baron, were both great soldiers; the latter, a Crusader, died in 1390, and was buried in Lichfield Cathedral, but his tomb was destroyed during the Civil Wars. After some years of dispute between Edmund, fifth Earl of Stafford, and Sir Hugh Shirley, as to the Basset estates, a document was drawn up to effect a division, but ere it could be signed both claimants were slain at the battle of Shrewsbury, 1403.

Thus ended the Drayton line of the powerful house of Basset. Eminent in early English annals as justices, each of the families—the Bassets of Weldon, of Drayton, and of Sapcote,—developed a race of warriors, and after the extinction of those baronies the name flourished for a long period. Shakespeare introduces a Basset of the Red Rose faction, in Henry VI. (acts 3 and 4), and the Staffordshire Bassets of Cheadle and Blore (near Oakover) provided six sheriffs of the Shire, and continued at the latter place until *temp.* Elizabeth, and in the church of Blore imposing memorials of them still remain.

Drayton remained a possession of the Staffords until 1521, when, by the attainder of the great Duke of Buckingham, it passed to the Crown, and was leased to a London mercer named Robinson, whose son William became notorious in connection with the murder in 1553 of Sir Richard Smyth, of Shireford, by his wife (a Chetwyn of Ingestre), for which crime she was burnt at the stake.

In 1578 Thomas Smythe, the son of William, who had parted with Drayton to Richard Paramore, forcibly resumed possession, and was not dislodged until the Sheriff, with a force of 7000 people, had beaten down part of the building with cannon; thereupon Paramore sold his interest in the lease to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

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* Matthew Paris's English History, vol. iii., p. 356.

The rude ancient house, principally of wood and plaster, long remained in the possession of the earl's widow, and was afterwards acquired from the Crown by one of her family.

C. E. Weale, *Tamworth.*

THE BLACK BROOK.

Not only are the surroundings of Drayton Park—particularly in the vale of the Black Brook—of considerable beauty, but the entire district for ages was a famous hunting-ground. During the ownership of the Duke of Buckingham, Edward IV. is said to have hunted here; and from the fact that the young Duke was his ward, the tradition, and the well-known ballad of the King and the Tamworth Tanner, are not improbabilities.

Tutbury Castle and the Plantagenets.

FOR more than six centuries the time-honoured fortress of Tutbury has been a possession of the house of Lancaster. From the time of Henry of Bolingbroke it has been annexed to the Crown, and Queen Victoria, Duchess of Lancaster, owns no more interesting relic of her ancestors than the venerable ruin which has been so intimately associated with the history of our country.

In point of antiquity the castle will favourably compete with any early English fortress. Although its history in Saxon times is obscure it is conjectured to have sheltered many of the early Mercian kings, and was assuredly wrecked and destroyed during the intermittent visits of the destroying Dane. The execrable massacre of the Danes in 1012, the diabolical revenge of the Saxon, is chronicled as originating at Hound Hill, Marchington, a few miles from the castle walls.

Shortly after the Conquest Tutbury was a stronghold of considerable importance. The castle, which stood upon an elevated rock of alabaster, was restored and enlarged, and the adjacent priory of Benedictines founded.

Many circumstances have tended to give a similarity to the history of the two great Midland fortresses of Kenilworth and Tutbury. Forfeited to the Crown after the fall of the Barons at Evesham, both were given to Edmund, the king's son, and for three centuries they shared the vicissitudes of his descendants. The memories of Thomas of Lancaster, John of Gaunt, and Henry of Bolingbroke, and the glamour of their chivalry and courtly life, are inseparably associated with both castles.*

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* It is somewhat remarkable that the name Kenilworth is derived from a Staffordshire man; it was the worth or possession of Chenieu, the King's Forester of Cannock, *temp.* Will. I.

Although destroyed in 1263 by Prince Edward, the stronghold of Tutbury again underwent a speedy restoration, and when Edmund of Lancaster died in 1296 his son, Thomas Earl of Lancaster, became its owner, living there (as his chief seat) in princely magnificence. During the reign of his uncle, Edward I., he was wholly engaged in the Scottish wars, but upon the accession of his cousin, Edward II., he was champion of the party opposing that monarch's infatuation for the arrogant Gaveston, for whose summary execution, near Kenilworth, in 1312, he was mainly answerable. Nor was he less active against the king's new favourites, the Despencers, who were banished after years passed in conflict.

R. Keene, *Burton-on-Trent.*

PRIORY CHURCH OF TUTBURY.

In 1321 the king's party became greatly strengthened and the Despencers returned home. In March, 1322, Humfrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford, joined forces with Lancaster at Tutbury, and posted a strong force to intercept the king at Burton Bridge. Lancaster despatched Sir Robert Holland, a knight whom he had advanced from the buttery, for reinforcements from the north, but he conducted them to the King. Actuated by a long-standing hatred of Lancaster, the king and the Despencers marched from Coventry with the strongest army they could raise. Their advanced forces were, however, repulsed at Burton Bridge.

The spot was singularly adapted for defence. The Trent is here wide and deep. The bridge, a quarter of a mile long, was extremely narrow and crooked, and its angles and projections, with its chapels and other buildings at the centre and at each end, greatly impeded traffic. It was thus easily guarded and formed an impregnable defence. But the King's forces by a rear movement crossed the Trent, near Walton, and the Earls were suddenly confronted with the main army. Unprepared for this movement they fired the town and hastily withdrew to Tutbury, followed by the Royalists.

Disappointed in their expected reinforcement a rapid retreat northward was decided upon. The treasure chest, by an accident or intent, was left at the bottom of the Dove, where it remained for seven centuries.* Kenilworth and Tutbury surrendered, and Lancaster and Hereford reached Lancaster's castle at Pontefract only to decide upon continuing their retreat. At Boroughbridge, 35 miles further north, they were confronted with another army, raised by the King's orders, and in the battle which ensued Hereford was slain, and Lancaster, with numerous barons and knights, became prisoners and were sent to York.

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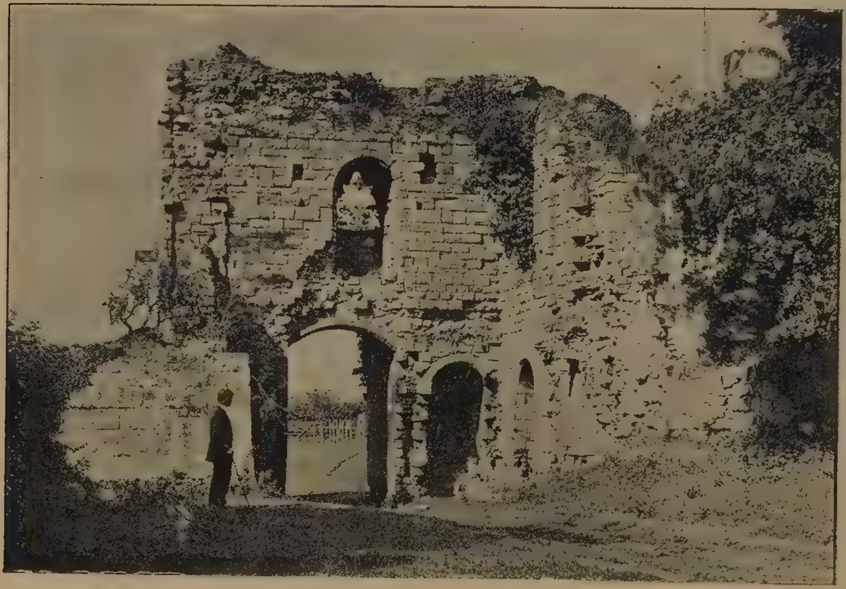
* The baggage and military chest are said to have been left by the Earl in charge of his treasurer, Leicester, who did his utmost to preserve it, but that in crossing in the dark, the panic-stricken guard lost the chest in the river. It is, however, equally probable—the King's forces being at the gates of the castle—that it was intentionally sunk beneath the waters of the Dove. The loss of the treasure had a remarkable sequel. The Justices of the King were sent down to inquire as to the forfeited goods and chattels of the late Earl, and in 1324 the Abbot of Burton was charged "with being illegally in possession of £400 worth of the effects." This the Abbot denied, but an adverse jury found a verdict against him for £300. The Abbot and several monks thereupon went to the King, who was in Needwood Forest at Yoxall (presumably at the royal hunting seat) solemnly swore they were not guilty, and obtained a promise of pardon. Meantime a writ to levy for £300 came from London, and the Abbot went again to the King, then at Derby, and a day was appointed in London, 2nd February, 1325, to hear the King's decision, on which day the Abbot and monks disclosed all they knew of the goods and received the King's pardon. Two years previously, 2nd March, 1323, the King whilst at Knaresborough had given to the Abbey (in memory of his glorious victory) the advowson of the churches of Tattenhall and Hanbury. This prosecution of the Abbot may have had a closer connection with the missing treasure than appears on the surface. If so, the Abbot's innocence was clearly proved when on the first of June, 1831, upon clearing the mill race of the Dove, a number of silver coins were found, about sixty yards below the bridge. A further search nearer to the bridge discovered 5000 other coins, and this attracted a great number of searchers, with the ultimate result that a total of about 100,000 coins were recovered. These being coined in the reigns of Henry III., Edward I., and Edward II., and including Scotch and foreign coins of the same period, left not a particle of doubt as to their forming part of the treasure of the ill-fated Earl, and although bridges had been built, mills erected, weirs, dams, and channels formed, the only effect of five centuries of submersion had been to sink the hoard some four or five feet beneath the surface of the gravel.

TUTBURY CASTLE AND BRIDGE
(*From an Old Print*).

The craving of the weak king to avenge the death of Gaveston, which he had nourished for ten years, was now to be satiated. By his orders Lancaster was conducted from York back to Pontefract, and here he was gloatingly reviled by his royal cousin, and, with every insult he could devise, ignominiously beheaded about a mile from the town. The followers of the unfortunate Earl were also put to death with relentless cruelty.

Four years after Lancaster's death, however, the Despencers were hanged, and the King was a prisoner in Lancaster's fortress of Kenilworth, which now belonged to Henry, the late Earl's younger brother, who treated the king with honourable humanity. In January, 1327, Edward was deprived of his crown, and in the September following was barbarously murdered at Berkeley Castle.



R. Keene, *Burton-on-Trent.*

JOHN OF GAUNT'S GATEWAY, TUTBURY CASTLE.

In 1345 Earl Henry was succeeded in the title and all the Lancastrian estates by his son Henry, who took the old Ferrers title of Earl of Derby, and for his brilliant services was created Duke of Lancaster. He died in 1360, and left two daughters, Maud, wife of Ralph Lord Stafford, and Blanche, wife of his kinsman John of Gaunt, the son of Edward III., who became Duke of Lancaster, and the possessor of Tutbury and Newcastle-under-Lyme and Kenilworth, and eventually all the estate of the Dukedom.

Blanche, the heiress of Tutbury, died at London, in the pestilence of 1369, leaving a son, Henry of Bolingbroke, born in 1366, and two daughters. In 1372 the Duke married Constance, daughter of Peter the Cruel, King of Castile. In her right he assumed the title of King of Castile, and returning to England, he gave her the choice of all his castles as a residence.

During the ownership of the two Henrys, Tutbury went to decay. Its commanding position, however, together with its proximity to the extensive and picturesque forest, and the richness of its surrounding vales, commended it to the Castilian Queen, and her choice fell upon Tutbury. A thorough and lavish restoration of the castle followed, and it was speedily fitted up as a royal palace. Then ensued a period of prosperity for Tutbury hitherto unknown. The splendour of the Court, the regal magnificence and princely hospitality of its occupants, the throng of noble visitors, its bands of minstrels, and continuous festivities imparted a popularity and lasting fame to this period unequalled in the annals of Tutbury.

Various were the devices of John of Gaunt to gain popularity. He created, or, as he professed, revived a custom of ancient tenure for the lordship of Wichnor, which required its lords, the Somervilles, who held under him, to keep a flitch of bacon hung in their hall, to be delivered yearly to the man or woman who for a year and a day had been married without quarrel or regret. A procession, with minstrels and trumpets, was the natural accompaniment of this rural festival, for so great was the duke's predilection for minstrelsy that troops of wandering musicians congregated at the Tutbury Court. These he reduced to order in a remarkable manner. In 1381, by letters patent, in quite royal style, he proclaimed a Court of Minstrels, and appointed a king with sub-officers and a code of laws. From this eccentric fraternity arose the famous Tutbury bull-running, which remained a popular custom and a scandal for ages, and was not abolished until 1778.

All this "excellent fooling" may have been intended for the amusement of his foreign wife, and to cover his own prolonged absences in London, or in active service, but during his periodical visits it is pleasant to think that he may occasionally have brought hither his friend (subsequently his relative), Geoffrey Chaucer, his friendship for whom was one of the brightest features of his career.

More assured, however, is the association of the youthful Bolingbroke, the popular idol of his time, with the halls of Tutbury and the glades of Needwood. He was heir to many castles, but, at least until his marriage in 1384, Tutbury, Newcastle, and Kenilworth would alternately be his English home. His first title of Earl of Derby was an accompaniment of the honor and castle of Tutbury, and many of his followers were young nobles of the Midlands. Later in life, Henry periodically lived at Monmouth and Kenilworth, but in his earlier years the country from Tutbury to Newcastle,[*] by the Roman Rikenield way, must have been tolerably familiar to him.

How long Tutbury retained the regard of Constance the Duchess is uncertain. Before her death in 1394, however, she passed much of her time in London and in Normandy.

Upon Henry of Lancaster's becoming king, Tutbury was annexed to the Crown. Its fame, however, was still maintained by the attractions of Needwood as a hunting ground, which, so late as the time of Henry VII., was a favourite royal resort. That monarch, it is said, left his name in

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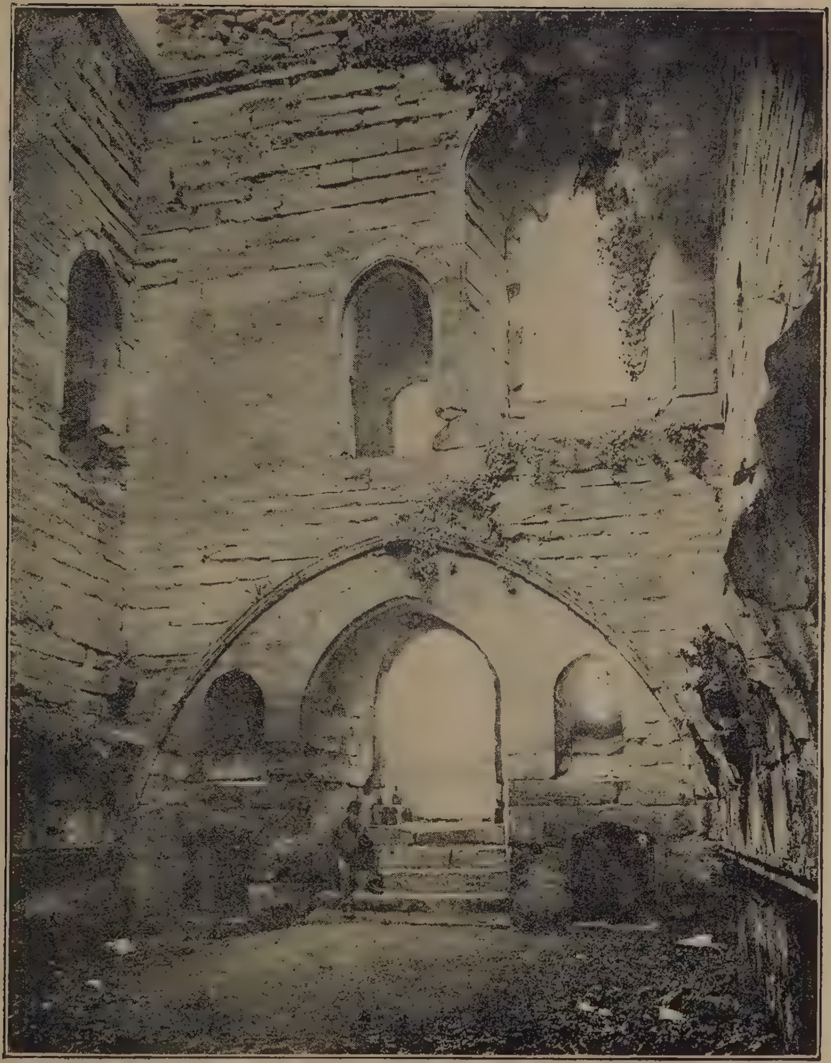
[*] A remarkable description of the fortress at Newcastle has been preserved. It is a written entry in a volume of Chaucer's poems, printed in 1610. The entry may have been copied from a much older written statement, the last two lines being added by the copyist:—"There be manie that need be tould what John of Gaunt his Newcastle was, and will sore lament it now is not, to give the needy sojourner largess of bread, beef, and beer. Our grandames doe say that theire grandames did delight to tell what it had been, and how well it was counted off before theire daye; althof they say onlie of it what they had beene tould; as how that the Newcastle was no more nor 150 paces fro south to north, but well nigh two hundred from est to west; and had two transepts and four bays, with dungen tower of twentie paces square, which rose in three storys of the full height of seventy feet: that it did stand over all the knoll in the middest of the picturesque vale and gentle riseing hills, verie delightful and riche in pastur and woodlands, and to the west and north remnants of diverse parkes belonginge. A low portal, and not well-lighted passage, did admit to the halle, very large and spacious, with roof loftie, and painted with devices, gallerie for the minstrels, and the walls clothed with geer of warfare, helmets, coates of mail armour, buff jerkins like shirtes, and such like doublets. Wending a gloomy staircase did lead to the state rooms and beddchamber of the Prince, and other on the upper for companie. The drawbridge to the north did approche into the court, ninetie paces in length, with thirtie in the width, and south and west were two lesser. The walls outer had good buttresses to the height of thirty feet, and the whole was moer fytt as a statelie comfortable dwellinge then as a fortress of defence, cause of the rising landes south and este. It almoste now is all carried away, and Measter Sneyde doth hold the ground, and the mote, and the mills."



R. Keene, *Burton-on-Trent.*

TUTBURY CASTLE: RUINS OF STATE APARTMENT.

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the King's Standing, near Yoxall, as also in a charming story, which relates that, whilst hunting in the forest, the king became separated from his party, and lost his way. He at length reached the abode of a humble cottager, named Taylor, whose wife had become the mother of three children at a birth.* The occurrence aroused the King's sympathy, and he undertook the cost of educating the children, all of whom ultimately became learned divines.

In its declining years this royal castle became the prison of the ill-fated Scottish Queen ; it was subsequently visited by James I. for pleasure, and by Charles I., both for pleasure and from necessity, and with his fall came the end of Tutbury as the home of kings.

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* This incident must have occurred early in Henry's reign, and some years after the children's birth, for the eldest son, Dr. John Taylor, became Rector of Sutton Coldfield in 1504. Subsequently (1520) he was Chaplain to Henry VIII., an Ambassador in 1525, Master of the Rolls 1528, and died 1534.

Malvoisin and Handsacre.

UPON the road from Lichfield to Uttoxeter, near the Trent Valley station of Armitage, and visible to travellers by the flying trains to Ireland and Scotland, stands the ancient Hall of Handsacre. Venerable as is its external appearance, it yet embodies, in its walls and chimneys and its moat, survivals of a still more ancient building. Here the Handsacres were settled from a period shortly after the Conquest, and here they still lived when Bolingbroke became King. The whole neighbourhood is rich in beauty and in historical incident. It lies on the borderland of the forest, near to Hawkesyard, the embattled seat of the Rugeleys; to Bromley, the Saxon home of Leofric the Wise; to Armitage, whose church on the rock, overlooking the Trent, occupies the site of the hermitage from which its name is derived; and to Mavesyn, long the possession of the descendants of Malvoisin the Norman.

For many generations the Handsacres and the Malvoisins were not only neighbours, but friendly allies. Originally the Malvoisins were seated at Blithebury, where (*temp.* Henry I.) Hugh Malvoisin founded a Benedictine priory, which was afterwards transferred to the priory of Black Ladies at Brewood. Subsequently the Malvoisins settled at Mavesyn, near the Trent, and here still remains an ancient gate house and great chamber, with ponderous timbers, said to have belonged to their moated manor house, now replaced by a last century edifice.

That the Handsacres, whom Erdeswick calls a race of very brave knights, were not inferior in rank to the Malvoisins is shown by the marriage, about 1250, of Sir William Handsacre with Ada, the widow of Henry Lord Hastings, of Fillongley, daughter of the Earl of Huntingdon and niece of the great Earl of Chester.

The friendly relations of the two houses, whose lands were divided only by the waters of the Trent, at length became changed. Disputes as to manorial mills have been common in all ages, and a dispute as to a mill on the river between the two lordships was the apparent cause of a feud, not only between the two lords but their tenants also; for, according to Shaw, great animosities prevailed between the inhabitants north and south of the river concerning the mill rights, and, encouraged by the rancour of party and the fury of rebellion, was to be terminated only by fire and sword, bloodshed and death.

As early as 1382 Robert Maveyson had leased to John Hamond, fisherman, his fishery in the Trent at Bryggewater, between Handsacre and Oxonholm Pool, and the miller, one Robert Mulner, got into dispute as to the boundary of the two parishes at the mill dam and floodgates. The dispute resulted in a feud and an affray, ending in a riot, in which the mill was burnt and Lawrence de Frodesley, of the Handsacre party, was killed by the Malvoisians.

The local animosities were, however, but too surely the result of partisanship in the national struggles. The feudal lord of Malvoisin's estates was Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel, whilst Handsacre held under the Bishop of Lichfield, Richard Scrope. The brave Earl and his brother Thomas, the Archbishop of York and afterwards of Canterbury, were among the victims of King Richard's treachery and duplicity, whilst Scrope was appointed by King Richard, to the prelacy of York. The fact that Bolingbroke, who had but recently lived at Tutbury—which about the period of Malvoisin's marriage was at the height of its splendour—must have been personally popular in the neighbourhood, may have added zeal to the duty Robert Malvoisin owed to his feudal lord.

On the other hand, Sir William Handsacre adhered to the son of the

Black Prince, by reason, probably, that his fealty was owing to the Bishop, Richard Scrope—whose father was King Richard's Chancellor and Keeper of the Great Seal—and the two knights must have taken opposite sides, when in 1399, Bolingbroke, deprived of his vast estates, suddenly returned from exile, and speedily relieved Richard of his crown, made him a prisoner at Flint Castle, and conveyed him to London.

On this journey, by way of Lichfield, Bolingbroke probably proceeded by way of his stronghold at Newcastle-under-Lyme, and passed very near to Malvoisin's Manor House. At Lichfield, the retiring King nearly effected his escape, by creeping through the window of a tower, into a garden. He was, however, discovered, conveyed to London, and eventually to Pontefract, and Henry became King.

Three years later, Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and his son Sir Henry, renowned as Hotspur, who had been chiefly instrumental in Henry's accession, were offended at the treatment they received from the King. Revolt followed, a revolt planned with unusual care. A combination was effected with the partisans of Mortimer, Earl of March, the Yorkist heir to the throne; also with the Scottish King, then at enmity with England, and with Glendower, the revolting Prince of Wales. A powerful army was raised, which marched southwards; whilst King Henry, who had a strong army ready for active service in the field, at once proceeded to Burton-on-Trent. During his stay there, probably at Tutbury, intelligence came that Hotspur's forces were marching towards Shrewsbury, to join Glendower.

Such was the state of affairs when Malvoisin and Handsacre assembled their little bands of tenantry, bowmen, billmen and horsemen, according to their degree. The muster was a hasty one. Malvoisin's object was to reach the King at Burton, or join him on his march; Handsacre's to meet Percy's forces coming from the north. As the King expected reinforcements at Bridgnorth, he would march along the Watling Street. The Percy party would probably be appointed to muster at Stafford. Handsacre did not, however, take the road through Rugeley, for the tradition is fixed, and all accounts agree, that the meeting with Malvoisin and the deadly struggle which ensued occurred on the north of the Trent, midway between the present modern high bridge and Malvoisin's house. The spot is pointed out as beneath two ancient oaks called Gog and Magog.

GOG AND MAGOG.

Various are the versions of the conflict. They all agree, however, in the main features, and are said to have been derived from an authentic account in Latin, preserved in the British Museum. The following is the description given by Erdeswick:

> Sir Robert Mavesine, Knight, slain at the battle of Shrewsbury, *ex parte regis*, as his monument in Mavesine Ridware saith, and well might be called Malvoisine (evil neighbour) for (as the report of the country is) going towards the said battle he met with his neighbour, Sir William Handsacre, Knight, going also towards the said battle, either of them being well accompanied with their servants and tenants, and upon some former malice as it might seem, or else knowing other to be backed by the contrary party, they encountered each other and fought as it were a skirmish, or little battle, where Mavesine had the victory; and having slain his adversary went on to the battle, and was there slain himself.

A few days later, on the 21st July, 1403, the partisans of the two houses fought their first battle. Fifty years later commenced the exterminating Wars of the Roses in the same cause, but no battle was more valiantly fought than that on the historic field near Shrewsbury, and in none was the carnage greater. Among the slain was Sir Robert Malvoisin, at whose hands Sir William Handsacre had so recently fallen the first victim of this great contention.

Malvoisin's widow, Joan, erected an altar tomb in Mavesin church to her husband's memory. She also procured (14th May, 1407) from the Bishop of Lichfield, John Burghill, the successor of Scrope, a license to celebrate masses in the family oratory, and there is little doubt, that requiem for the soul of her husband was performed in the great chamber over the gateway, yet remaining.

The untimely death of the two knights, doubtless, put a speedy end to the family feud; indeed, the tragedy had a sequel partaking in some degree of the romance of the Montagues and Capulets. Sir Robert left two daughters, the youngest, Margaret, being then aged eleven. To her came wooing, William, the son and heir of the Handsacre knight, and about the date of the Bishop's license, became her accepted husband; and Erdeswick tells us that she brought him a goodly estate in recompense of the death of his father, slain by hers. But here the romance ends.

Having no son, Handsacre Manor passed in the female line, by marriage, to Nicholas Westcote, brother to the Westcote who changed his name to Lyttelton, and was father to the great Judge Lyttelton, and Mavesyn Rydware passed by the marriage of Margaret's elder sister to Sir John Carwarden, and remained in that family until Elizabeth's reign, when John Chadwick married the heiress, and John de Heley Malvoisin Chadwick is now the representative of the old family.

KINVER.

Kinver and Cannock: The Royal Forests.

THE recreation of deer-hunting always ranked high with the Saxon kings and nobles, and in the days of the early Norman kings, by the creation of new forest laws, specially administered by itinerant justices, and of customs locally controlled by a retinue of officials, the preservation of royal hunting grounds became of serious importance to the English people.

These customs have long faded from memory, and the laws are but little understood; yet to the people of South Staffordshire they were of great moment. Large tracts of wood and waste long retained in the King's hands, but originally to some extent folk lands, over which the people had important common rights, were, after the Conquest, gradually extended and formed into defined districts, until at length, from the Dove to the Stour and the Severn, from Uttoxeter to Kidderminster, from Stafford to Sutton, nearly the whole of the wood and plain had been brought within the compass of one of its three great forests—the royal forests of Cannock and Kinfare, and the Earl of Derby's forest of Needwood.

To the north of the county the vast stretches of heathland and moorland afforded but little cover for the beasts of the chase. Yet in the west the sylvan parts of Cheshire and Salop extended over their borders. Particularly was this the case north of Madeley, whilst at Leek the forest joined hands with the King's forest of Macclesfield. All this formed part of the great wood or lyme which for ages had formed an impenetrable barrier between the tribal folk of Cheshire and Stafford.

No forest laws are known earlier than those attributed to Canute, and their authenticity has been seriously challenged as the invention of a century later. By these laws, although a freeman had the game upon his own land, he was punishable if he chased a beast of the forest, and if the offender was of a lower grade the punishment was greater; whilst a bondman so offending was outlawed, and for killing a royal beast his life was forfeit. A forest could be made or extended by the King alone. This was effected by a perambulation and defining of bounds under a royal commission, with proclamation throughout the shire. The afforested district was not all woodland, nor was it made waste, nor was all the land in the King's hands, although it would naturally include a considerable woodland which was the King's demesne.

Of the Staffordshire forests, Needwood and Leek were granted to subjects, and therefore governed by local courts. The rights of the Earls of Chester in the forest Leek, or "Lech and Swythomlee," passed to the Abbot of Dieu-la-cres, and were subservient to the King's adjacent forest of Macclesfield, and special pains were taken by Edward I. to prevent similar encroachments to those made by the Bishops at Cannock, but this did not save his deer, and the abbey was supplied with venison from the forest.

The limits of Kinver forest were very considerably extended in the time of Henry II., and the ultimate bounds were almost identical with those of the hundred of Seisdon. In the same King's reign Cannock forest boundary also underwent considerable extension south of Watling Street; these extensions naturally caused great discontent.

In the year 1286, the ancient bounds of Cannock were thus defined by the Foresters and Verderers of "Cannok and Kynefare," and a Jury of twelve Knights and others:

Beginning at the bridge of Finchespathe (near West Bromwich), by the Tame to Holbrook,* by the Holbrook to the Vill of Walsall, thence to Bolestile (apparently near little Aston), thence to the Bourne (a tributary of the Black brook), by the Bourne to the high Road, near the park of Drayton, and by that road, near Watling Street, as far as the Thame river,† thence to the Trent, and by the Trent to the Sow (near Tixall), by the Sow to the river of Pencriz (excluding Stafford), by that river to the bridge of Covene, near the park of Brewode, thence by the road to Pendeford, through the middle of the Fossmore to Oxeford (Oxley Bushbury), thence to Wolverhampton, through the middle of the town, and by the high Road as far as the bridge of Finchespath.‡

Thus, not only Lichfield City, and many townships, with part of Wolverhampton, Walsall, and Wednesbury, but innumerable private manors were within the forest, and subject to its laws.

There was, however, one notable exception. The Bishops of the diocese had among their great possessions parks at Wyrley, Packington, Brewood, Heywood, and other places in the forest, and also an extensive chase, the name of which survives in Cannock Chase. King Richard granted special privilege to this chase, privileges which the Bishops had not been slow to extend, until eventually they became as potent in their chase as the Kings in their forest. They defied the officers of the forest, and even set up deer leaps (saltatorium), a clever device for enticing the King's deer into their enclosures without a corresponding facility for returning. A good Churchman, be he bishop, abbot, or monk, loved good venison, and the bishops' men, and even their bailiffs were not averse to occasionally procuring a hart or a buck from the royal forest.

The mention of the Chase necessitates a passing reference to one of the most interesting incidents connected with the shire, the connection of Canute, the Danish King of England, with Cnot, Canok, or Cannock. That the Saxon Kings had a house here has been stated by many authorities; positive evidence, however, is given of the fact in the Pipe

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* Another Holbrook ran into the Tame at Perry Barr, and marked the bounds of Sutton Chase from Bolestile.

† This was the road from Sutton to Tamworth, and thus Drayton (originally a part of Sutton Chase), and also Tamworth were excluded.

‡ Finchespath was near the high road, between Birmingham and Wolverhampton, it was in the lordship of West Bromwich, and led from Swan Village to the Tame.

Rolls for 1157 of this house with a garden being at Radmore, near Beaudesert,* and investigations by Mr. W. H. Duignan very strongly indicate the position of the house to have been at Court Bank Cover, and together with the ancient monastery of Radmore in the vicinity of the Castle Ring, and the park of Beaudesert.†

REMAINS OF ANCIENT MOAT, COURT BANK COVER.

At the Domesday survey, Richard Chineu was the King's forester of Canoc, he also held part of the lordship of Kenilworth, which appears to have taken his name. The monastery of Radmore became a Cistercian Abbey, and, in 1154, was removed to Stoneleigh. The position at Cannock, though good enough for hermits, was unfit for an Abbot, who suffered from scarcity of food and the inroads of the foresters.

The foresters who troubled the Abbot were a numerous company. The officers of the forest consisted of the Chief Forester or Steward of the king, the Foresters in fee—usually Knights,—the Riding foresters or Rangers, and an array of under-foresters or keepers. These controlled and protected the beasts of the forest, whilst the duties of Reguarders, Verderers, Agisters, and Woodwards concerned the woods, herbage, and wastes, the timber, fences, pannage, and hawks, also trespasses and offences by landholders in the tillage or destruction of underwood, and the expediting of dogs, by maiming of the fore-foot.

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* Salt's Collections for Staffordshire, vol. i., p. 24-25.

† King's House and Priory of Radmore, by W. H. Duignan, *Midland Antiquary*, Dec., 1884, vol. iii., p. 58.

The land of every freeholder was thus subject to control, and, in return, he retained rights of free pasture for his cattle in the forest.

The beasts of the forest, as we are told by the ancient rhyme, were four in number.

> "Whersoever ye fall by fryth or by fell,
> My dere chyld take heed how Tristrom doth you tell;
> How many maner bestys of venery ther were,
> Lysten to your dame, and then shall you lere.
> Four maner bestys of venery ther are;
> The first of them is the hert; the second ys the hare,
> The Boore ys oon of them—the Wolff and not oon more." *

Of the deer of the forest, the red deer and the roe are native to the soil. All were in every way distinct. They bore different names for each year; thus, a stag was a calf, a brocket, a spayard, a staggard, and in the fifth year a stag or hart—the female a hind; and a buck from a fawn became a pricket, a sorel, a sore, and in the fifth year a buck—and the female a doe.

The close or fawning time was from 10th June to 10th July; the hart or stag, and also the buck, were in season from Midsummer to the 14th September, and the hind and doe from 14th September to 2nd February; the season of the roebuck was from Easter to Michaelmas, and of the roe

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* That the Wolf was not extinct, as has been oft stated, is shown by the following extract from the pleas of the forest for the year 1286, as extracted from the Public Record Office, by Major-General the Hon. G. Wrottesley; printed in Vol. v. of the Collections of the Salt Society, a work of the greatest value and interest, to which we are indebted for a considerable part of the information in this chapter. It is presented by John de Clynton, Steward of the forest of Cannock, and by the Verderers, that a certain buck was killed by wolves in the forest, in 9 Ed. I. (1280), and it was fat; the foresters had it skinned after it had been viewed by the Verderers, and it was salted and handed over to the keeping of Robert de la Putte, and the horns were given to John de Engleton to answer for the same; and as he did not produce them before the justices he is in mercy. And William Trumwyn afterwards took the venison and consumed it in his own house, and now before the justices—contradicting their own presentment—they stated that he did not consume the venison in his own house, but gave it to the Lepers of Freford. The said William is, therefore, "*quietus*," and the Steward and four Verderers are in mercy.

from Michaelmas to 2nd February. The hart or stag was the king of the forest, and if hunted by the King, and it escaped, it became a hart royal. Tradition has much exaggerated the punishment of deer stealers or malefactors in venison—the prosecution was one of three stages; first, before a Court of Attachment, held every forty days, when the offender was released on pledge or bail; second, before a Court of the Freeholders and Verderers, held thrice yearly, called the Swanimote, a Court distinctly Saxon in its origin and principle, here the prisoner was tried and put back for the Justices of the Forest to pass sentence. The Court of the Justices in Eyre, or travelling Justices, properly a triennial Court, was held at much wider intervals,* preceded with warrant, and heralded with proclamation, it performed its work without fear or favour, and tempered justice with mercy. It has left lasting records which would reflect credit on the administration of the law in any age. Peer and peasant, baron and boor, were treated with an equality which wins admiration, although some of the court's decisions may evoke a smile. The working of the forest laws, and the persons and offences with which they dealt will be best shown by a few cases and the decisions thereon, some of which show a fine indifference to the high position of the offenders, and an equal disregard to the power of the Church.

In 1271, William de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, and John, his brother, having taken a hind from the forest of Kinver, failed to appear when summoned, and the court ordered the sheriff to produce them.

A friar and others of the Abbey of Combe, who many times during one season carried off the King's venison to a grange (*i.e.*, a farm) of the Abbey at Trescote, Seisdon, also failed to appear; the court ordered the sheriff to distrain the lands of the abbott.

Baldwyn de Fryvyle and others of the household of the Bishop of Worcester took a stag and three hinds to the Bishop's Castle of Hartlebury—the Sheriff to produce them, and the Bishop to be prosecuted before the King.

Walter de Bere and Walter Petit took a hind *which was in front of the dogs of the King*, and carried it away, and were in prison. Petit is pardoned because he is weak-headed, and Bere released for a fine, 13s. 4d.

Many of the prosecutions show the state of anarchy and lawlessness in the Shire during the Barons' war, and it is incidentallly shown that Walsall Wood was entirely destroyed by the opposing factions.*

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* The Justices' Court, which tried the cases from both forests, would appear from the perambulation reports to have been held at Wednesbury, a town convenient for the people of both districts.

Thomas de Bromlegh, a common malefactor of venison, and others, of the garrison of the Castle of Bruges [Bridgenorth,] under Hamon le Strange, took a hind to the Castle. Two years previously, Thomas was in prison at Warwyk, for taking a stag, and for killing a forester's horse. Bromlegh's receiver, one William de Loddesdon, of Wolvrehampton, to be arrested.

Roger le Strange, with the huntsman of John le Strange and others, were presented for taking venison in Kanok, 1271. [John had married a daughter of the Baron of Dudley, and Roger was subsequently a justice of the Forest; both were of the King's party.] Presentments were also made against the Bailiff of the Bishop of Chester (Lichfield), and the huntsman of Roger de Someri.

James Andedelegh, his son, Chaplain, and Esquire, presented for taking a buck at Bentlegh, and a stag at Gaule. James is now in Ireland with King Edward, son of the King.

Robert de Stanndon, with nine other persons, presented for coming with many others, who are dead—with Ralph Basset, who is likewise dead, on Wednesday before Christmas day, 1263, and taking 10 does, three bucks, two hinds, and a fecon, and carrying them to Ralph's house, at Drayton. Robert is in the Holy land, another with Andedelegh in Ireland, others cannot be found; and one Richard de Wemme is pardoned for the soul of the King, because he is poor and a minstrel.

In another case eleven persons, similarly charged, were said to be befriended by Ralph Basset, so that no forester dared to attach them. Some were fined. One who had turned monk was at Wenlock; the prior of Wenlock was ordered to produce him. Some could not be found, and were outlawed. Henry de Aumary was then a Hospitaller, and in the Holy Land; others were bailed, and some outlawed.

That the foresters were no respecters of rank, the following presentments will prove:

Hamon Le Straunge (just rewarded by the King with Chartley Castle, at which he lived, and with other manors), for several offences.

John de Clinton (stopping in the house of the Dean of Tamworth), for taking venison in Hopewas. (He was subsequently Steward of the Forest).

Philip Marmyon, William de Honsacre, and the Lords of other Manors, for taking venison to Honsacre and Tamworth Castle.

Several of these offenders were of the King's party.

Presentments were made against Marmyon, for stealing deer in June, September, and also at Christmas of 1267. The September presentment shows that when the King (Henry III.) had given to the said Philip a stag and a buck in the said forest, he proceeded to help himself to several others, which were carried to his Castle.

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* Salt Society's Collections, vol. v., p. 153.

On Whit-Monday, 1273, Roger de Somery, Baron of Dudley, and his men, hunting in his Chase of Baggerugge, put up a Stag, it fled towards the forest (Kinver), it was shot but fell dead a hundred yards within the forest. Somery's servants drew it out and carried it to his house at Swynford. Roger to appear before the King, and it is added, because he did not satisfy the King, his fine is fixed at 200 marks if it pleased the King.

VIEW FROM KINVER EDGE.

The Court adjudicating upon this case was not held until 1286, when similar fines were imposed upon Philip Marmyon, for stealing deer in Alrewas, in July and at Christmas, 1272, 14 years previously, and upon Nicholas, Baron Stafford, for a like offence in 1285.

The duties of the foresters like the modern gamekeeper entailed considerable personal danger.

Walter de Clivedon, forester in fee of Teddesley, and Roger de Pecham, riding forester of Knoc, in March, 1267, found Thomas de Bromley a frequent transgressor in the forests of Stafford and Salop, in the park covers of Teddesley with bows and arrows, and challenged him, he defended himself in an oak tree and shot arrows at them, and they took him by force and delivered him to the keeper of the Castle at Bridgenorth (he was formerly a soldier of that Castle under the Barons), he was convicted, but John Gaunt of Wolverhampton, a receiver of his venison, was pardoned on account of his poverty.

The following case which appears to show that the King (Edward I.) was hunting near Penkridge in 1275, is somewhat in contrast to the one in which the Baron of Dudley was heavily fined.

When the huntsmen of the King were hunting in Gaueleye, 1275, they put up a stag and followed it into a wood in the park of Brewood, and John de la Wytemore shot it, and it fled out of the forest as far as the fish ponds of the Nuns of Brewood and it was dragged out dead, and John Gyffard of Chyllynton came up and claimed it, saying, he had pursued it—and they skinned it and John took half to his house, and the Nuns of Brewood had the other half. As they are poor they are pardoned, for the good of the King's soul, but Chyllynton and Wytemore are arrested and fined—for the stag although taken out of the forest yet it was the chase of the King, and put up by his dogs within the forest.

Besides the pleas of vension, other offences against the forest laws largely occupied the time of the Justices. The destruction or lopping of wood, or ploughing grass land (*wasta*); making enclosures or encroachments (*purprestures*); clearances of trees or brushes (*assarts*); and various other offences were very numerous and fruitful sources of enquiry; as, also, were offences committed by the officers of the forest, who abused their powers, stole the King's deer, oppressed the people, levied taxes for various fictitious offences, and cut down and sold great numbers of the best and handsomest oaks in the woods.

CANNOCK CHASE, NEAR BEAUDESERT.

Ancient Encampment. The Castle Ring.

The Battle of Blore Heath.

JUST about the dawn of the new age—when Gutenberg and his companions had brought their labours to a practical issue in the invention of the printing press, and when constitutional government had been established on a firm basis in England, there arose a cloud, "little as a human hand," which soon spread over the land—a war-cloud, which divided the whole country into two opposing camps; and very early in the strife the soil of Staffordshire was stained with the blood of the combatants. The first blow was struck in the first battle of St. Alban's, 31st May, 1445, when the Yorkists had mastered the royal troops; but a truce was patched up, and the King, who had been made prisoner, was released. Four years later, however, was fought what was in reality the first of those battles which were now to be continuous till the Yorkists regained the throne which, since the days of Bolingbroke, they had lost, and which was theirs by strict legal right. Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, had gathered together a powerful force, and marched towards Ludlow to join the Duke of York and made ready to assert the claims of the latter to the throne. "Whereupon," says Stow, "those that were about the King, and also the Queene, who lay at Eglishall,* mooved him to assemble a great power, whereof James Touchet, Lord Audley, was made chief, and had the leading of them into the field called Bloreheath, neere unto Mucklestone, by the which the said Duke and the Earle must needs passe."

Blore Heath was at that time a large open waste (which is now enclosed), and here Lord Audley's forces, 10,000 in number, encamped for the night, on their march towards the rebel force, by the side of a little brook. The encounter took place on the 23rd September, 1459, and although Salisbury commanded but about half the strength of Lord Audley's army, he boldly determined to give battle, and in doing so resorted to a stratagem which gave him the victory. Under cover of the night he feigned a retreat, and retired in such peculiar order that at daybreak Audley, perceiving the opposing force, as he thought, in retreat, percipitately followed in pursuit, feeling that he had only to overtake and cut down a flying foe. Scarcely, however, had his vanguard crossed the brook, and so become enmeshed among trees, roots, rocks, and stones, which encumbered the deep bed of the streamlet,* than the Yorkist forces wheeled round upon them, and having them fairly entrapped, so completely out-manœuvred them that, after a five hours' struggle, in which the King's forces were assisted, it is said, by passing peasantry with all sorts of irregular weapons, and during which the little brook ran with blood, a victory was achieved for the white rose and the House of York. Lord Audley fell in the fight, and with him many brave knights and esquires; the number of the slain being over 2400, the

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* Eccleshall.

LORD AUDLEY'S CROSS.

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* Pennant says the stream was "not broad but deep;" and Rapin describes the condition of Audley's forces at the moment of Salisbury's stratagem as "some being over the river, others in the water, and others ready to pass." But a correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the Rev. W. Snape, curate of Keele, is disposed to fix the site of the battle some five or six miles away from that accorded to it by tradition, at a point somewhere between Heleigh Castle (the seat of Lord Audley) and the Camp and Byrth Hills.

greatest loss being among the Cheshire yeomen, who wore the Prince of Wales's badge of a silver swan, which the Queen had ordered to be distributed to this contingent of Audley's army. The retreating Lancastrian force, however, contrived to carry off two sons of the Earl of Salisbury as prisoners—Thomas and John—either as they pursued the fugitives or returned home wounded. They were captured near Taporley, and imprisoned in Chester Castle, but they were soon afterwards liberated.

The Earl of Salisbury enjoyed the fruits of his victory but a short time, being taken prisoner at the battle of Wakefield in the following year, and beheaded there at the close of the engagement. Three of his sons also fell in battle. The second son, Sir Thomas Neville, fell in the same battle as his father; and Richard, the eldest son—the powerful Earl of Warwick, known in history as the King-maker—and the youngest son John, Marquis of Montacute were both killed in the battle of Barnet in 1470.

A cross of wood was erected on the field of battle, which, being thrown down in the last century by a cow rubbing against it, was re-erected on a massive stone pedestal by the Lord of the Manor, and still stands in a large field adjoining the road from Market Drayton to Newcastle-under-Lyme. On the east front of the pedestal is the following inscription:—

ON THIS SPOT
WAS FOUGHT THE BATTLE OF
BLORE HEATH
IN 1459.
LORD AUDLEY,
WHO COMMANDED FOR THE SIDE OF LANCASTER,
WAS DEFEATED AND SLAIN.
TO PERPETUATE THE MEMORY
OF THE ACTION AND THE PLACE,
THIS ANCIENT MONUMENT
WAS REPAIRED IN
1765.
AT THE CHARGE OF THE LORD OF THE MANOR,
CHARLES BOOTHBY SKRIMSHER.

The loss of the battle was a severe blow to Queen Margaret who, with the object of intercepting the enemy in his march, had probably taken up her headquarters at Eccleshall, and adopted every precaution to ensure a victory for the House of Lancaster. The recorded descriptions of the fight scarcely accord with the changed features of the district at the present day. Yet there is no reason to doubt that the Queen had arranged to view the battle from the tower of Mucclestone Church, although it lay on the direct line of the Duke's march to the chosen field of battle, from which it is nearly two miles distant. The intervening land is now thickly wooded, but even when it was open heath-land the valley in which the carnage is said to have taken place would be hidden from her view. After the battle the queen is said to have again reached the protection of Eccleshall. This, however, must have been after the enemy had left the field, as it lay to the south-east and to journey towards it from Mucclestone, immediately after the engagement would have been to encounter the flying forces of Lancaster and their pursuers, as they fled northwards towards Chester.

In commemoration of Queen Margaret's connection with Mucclestone Church a beautiful three-light window has been placed in the tower (in the original mullions) representing St. George, King Henry VI., and the Queen.

MUCCLESTONE CHURCH.

King Edward the Fourth and the Tanner of Tamworth.

AMONG the stories and legends common in old English folk-literature, none have met with greater favour than that class in which the sovereign is made to converse on terms of good fellowship with one of his humblest subjects. Of these, Henry VIII. and the cobbler, James I. and the tinker, and William III. and the forester are notable, but do not give so pleasing a picture of life in merrie England as that contained in the old ballad of King Edward IV. and the Tanner of Tamworth.

Two copies of this ballad are extant in black letter, one of which is in the Bodleian Library, and is entitled "A merrie, pleasant, and delectable historie betweene K. Edward the Fourth and a Tanner of Tamworth, . . . printed at London by John Danter, 1596." the other is of later date, and consists of a single sheet folio, in the Pepys collection. But although the earliest extant copy dates only from the last decade of the sixteenth century, the ballad was in existence long before that period. An entry of its title indeed appears in the Registers of the Stationers' Company as early as 1564, and the ballad is referred to by Puttenham in his "Arte of English Poesie, 1589."

The scene of this merry story was in all probability the road between Sutton Coldfield and Basset's Pole, on the way to Tamworth. On the road from Sutton Coldfield to Lichfield, about half-a-mile from the former, a byway leads down on the right hand side into a hollow in the direction of Ashfurlong, and then rises towards Basset's Pole, from whence it continues in a devious course to Tamworth. As the wayfarer of to-day reaches the top of the hill near Basset's Pole, he descries on the left of the road the broad tower of Tamworth Church, more than four miles away, and looking backward over Sutton he may perceive the tower of Erdington Orphanage, and virtually of the outskirts of Birmingham—thus standing, as it were, at the parting of the ways between the two towns. Somewhere about this spot we may assume the tanner of the ballad to have reached, probably on his homeward journey from Birmingham market. For the art of tanning was probably more largely practised in Birmingham than in any town in the Midlands, and hence it became the great market for hides skins, and leather, and would be largely attended by buyers, as well as attracting those who had the raw hides to sell, from as far away even as Wales. Tanning was doubtless also practised at an early period at Tamworth, where an old-fashioned open yard near the Anker bears the name of the Tan Yard, albeit no tanning has been carried on therein for many years past. It may therefore be assumed that the tanner of King Edward's time found

TAMWORTH ROAD, NEAR BASSET'S POLE.

occasion to make frequent journeys between Tamworth and Birmingham, and that he was returning from one of these on the occasion which gave rise to the ballad.

It was

"In summer time, when leaves grow green,
And blossoms bedeck the tree,"

and King Edward IV. had been hunting in the neighbourhood of Drayton Basset with his lords. Being near the Tamworth road, the King espied the "bold tanner," riding along on "a mare of four shilling"—an inferior sort of beast even for that time, when the average price of a horse was about thirteen shillings—with a "good cow-hide" for a saddle, the hide being in the rough state, with the horns and tail still attached to it. Such a sight, in the days "when England was merrie England still," and a King could forget the cares of State, and condescend to play a prank with one of his meanest subjects, prompted Edward to see whether some sport might not be got by a parley with the uncouth tanner; and bidding his lords hide in the underwoods, he approached the traveller:

"God speede, God speede thee," said our King;
"Thou art welcome, sir," sayd hee.
"The readyest way to Drayton Basset
I praye thee show to mee."

To this request the tanner gave a ready answer:

"To Drayton Basset woldst thou goe,
Fro' the place where thou dost stand
The next payre of gallowes thou comest unto,
Turn in upon thy right hand."

The place indicated would be a spot called Garroway Head, near to the entrance to Canwell Park. From Garroway Head, turning on the right hand, is a road leading direct to Drayton Basset, and it is traditionally affirmed that a gibbet adorned the spot at the junction of the roads; but the equivoque in the tanner's brusque direction was far from pleasant to the King:

"That is an unready waye," sayd our King,
"Thou doest but jest, I see:
Now shewe me out the nearest waye,
And I pray thee wend with mee."

But the tanner had ridden far that day on his sturdy mare, Brock, and he was hungry and anxious to reach his home, and therefore unwilling to parley any longer :

"Awaye with a vengeance !" quoth the Tanner :
"I hold thee out of thy witt :
All day have I ridden on Brocke, my mare,
And I am fasting yett !"

To this churlish reply, however, the King paid no heed, but bade him turn aside with him to Drayton Basset, where he might stay his appetite with viands of the best—"and," said the King, "I will pay thy fare."

"Gramercye for nothing," the tanner replyde,
"Thou payest no fare of mine :
I trowe I've more nobles in my purse
Than thou hast pence in thine."

For with all the King's gay equipage, the tanner deemed him nought else but a robber. Men still talked of the doings of Robin Hood and his band of robbers, who had for so long held sway in the forests of England, and the "lytell gestes" of the bold outlaw and his followers formed no inconsiderable part of the oral literature of the common people ; hence it was not surprising that the tanner should eye his sovereign with suspicion, riding forth thus unattended on the public highway, and accosting one whose outward appearance betokened the wide difference in their stations. Nor was it an unknown thing even for persons of position to play the highwayman. In 1342, two servants of a Lichfield merchant, as they journeyed towards Stafford with their horses were stopped on Cannock Chase by Sir Robert de Ridware and two of his squires, and robbed of the "spicery and mercery," with which their horses were laden. Nor was this an isolated case : "Many other lords," says Jusserand,* "were like him [*i.e.*, Ridware] surrounded by devoted men, ready for all enterprises. . . . A lord well surrounded with his partisans considered himself as above the common law, and justice had no easy matter to make herself respected by him." The last representative of the Bermingham family who held the lordship of

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* "Wayfaring Life," p. 148.

SHOREDITCH PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Birmingham, was sent to the Tower on a charge of highway robbery, and although there is good ground for believing that he was falsely accused, it speaks volumes for the prevalence of such practices that such a charge should have been got up against him.

Our tanner, therefore, may well have suspected that the man who had thus accosted him belonged to this class of "gentleman highwaymen," and that he had been entrapped into boasting of his well-filled purse.

"What art thou," he sayed, "thou fine fellowe,
Of thee I am in great feare,
For the cloathes thou wearest upon thy backe
Might beseeme a lord to weare."

"I never stole them," replied the King; whereupon the tanner retorted that in that case

"Thou playest as many an unthrift doth,
And standest in midds of thy goode,"

that is to say, he bore his fortune on his back, in his costly garments, as many a courtier is said to have done on the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

Having taken the measure of his man, as it were, the King now began to play with him in an encounter of wits.

"What tydinges heare you," said the Kynge,
"As you ryde farre and neare?"
"I hear no tydinges, sir, by the masse,
But that cowe-hides are deare."

"Cowe-hides, cowe-hides! What things are those?
I marvell what they bee!"
"What! Art a foole?" the tanner reply'd,
"I carry one under mee."

"What craftsman art thou?" said the King,
"I praye thee, tell me trowe."
"I am a barker,* sir, by my trade,
Nowe tell me what art thou?"

"I am a poore courtier, sir," quoth he,
"That am forth of service worne;
And faine I wolde thy prentise bee,
Thy cunninge for to learne."

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* That is, a tanner.

TAMWORTH.

"Marry, heaven forfend," the tanner replyde,
"That thou my prentise were;
Thou woldst spend more good than I shold winne,
By fortye shilling a yere."

The King was in a merry mood, and not to be balked of his sport; so he proposed an exchange of horses with the tanner. The bargain would seem to be with the tanner, yet he was unwilling to exchange his sorry "mare of four shilling" for the King's horse, except he had something to boot.

"What boot wilt thou have?" our King reply'd,
"Now tell me in this stound;"
"Noe pence, nor halfpence, by my faye,
But a noble in gold so round."

In spite of his demand of a gold noble to boot, however, the tanner still held to the belief that the King was a penniless adventurer, and when Edward tendered him "twentye groats of white moneyè" his surprise was as great as his former incredulity had been:—

"I would have sworne now," quoth the tanner,
"Thou hadst not had one penniè,"

With the King's horse and twenty groats to boot, the tanner was still unwilling to part with his cow-hide, and the exchange having been made, he threw the hide over the richly-caparisoned horse, and, with the help of the King, mounted into the saddle, marvelling much as he did so, "whether it were gold or brass, and exclaiming:—

"When I come home to Gyllian, my wife,
She'l say I am a gentilmon."

But when the noble steed saw the cow's horns and the tail, which were still attached to the hide, it became restive and bolted, with the unfortunate tanner on his back.

"The tanner he pulled, the tanner he sweat,
And held by the pummèll fast;
At length the tanner came tumbling downe:
His neck he had well-nigh brast."*

"Take thy horse again with a vengeance," he said,
"With mee he shall not byde."

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* Broken.

"My horse would have borne thee well enough," said the King, "but he knew not of thy cow-hide;" but if the tanner will insist on changing steeds again,

"By the faith of my bodye, thou jolly tannèr,
I will have some boote of thee."

This was turning the tables on the hard-bargaining tanner. He had taken twenty groats of the King, but the King would have nought less than twenty pounds for the exchange. The tanner's boasted wealth amounted only to one-and-twenty groats beside the twenty he had from the King.

"Here's twentye groats out of my purse,
And twentye I have of thine:
And I have one more which we will spende
Together at the wine."

But the King set a bugle to his lips, and blew a blast thereon, which brought up the lords and knights who had been in hiding. The sight of the gathering throng, spurring in from all sides, seemed to confirm the tanner's first suspicion. He may have heard the story of Sir Robert de Ridware and the Lichfield mercers, or some similar incident, and concluded that these were the robber-chief's retainers.

"Nowe out, alas!" the tanner he cryde,
"That ever I sawe this daye!
Thou art a strong thiefe, yon come thy fellowes
Will beare my cow-hide away."

"These are no thieves," said the King,

"They are the lords of the north countrêy,
Here come to hunt with mee."

"And soone before our King they came,
And knelt downe on the grounde;
Then might the tanner have beene awaye,
He had lever than twentye pound."

For he expected no less than that he himself should occupy the next gallows, which he had jocularly allotted to the King.

"A coller, a coller here," sayd the King.*

Then would the tanner

"—— lever than twentye pound
He had not beene so nighe;"

for he deemed that "after a coller cometh a halter." "I trowe," said he, "I shall be hang'd to-morrowe."

"Be not afraid, Tanner," said our King!
"I tell thee, so mought I thee,
Lo, here I make thee the best esquire
That is in the North countrie."

"For Plumpton-parke† I will give thee,
With tenants faire beside:
'Tis worth three hundred markes by the yeare,
To maintain thy good cowe-hide."

The tanner, thus relieved of his fears, was prompt in expressing his gratitude to the King, and his readiness to do suit and service to his lord in such manner as best befitted his calling, in accordance with the custom of the times.

"Gramercye, my leige," the tanner replyde,
"For the favour thou hast me showne;
If ever thou comest to merry Tamworth,
Neates leather shall clout thy shoon.

So ends the ballad, which, from the strong local colour which pervades it, must undoubtedly have been written by one who, if not actually a Staffordshire man, must have been intimately acquainted with the locality which forms the scene of the incident recorded, as well as with the surrounding neighbourhood and its inhabitants.

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* This stanza does not appear in the extant text of the ballad, but is restored from Selden's "Titles of Honor," being considered by that learned author good enough evidence for the fact that one mode of creating an esquire at that time was by the imposition of a collar.

† There was at that time a manor of Plumpton not far away, which in Dugdale's time was "known onely by certain grounds lying on the east side of Kingsburie parish," whereof one Walter de Plumpton was possessed (*temp.* Hen. IV.), who held it by a Danish Axe "which," says Dudgdale, "being the very charter whereby the said land was given unto one of his ancestors, hung up for a long time in the Hall of the capital messuage belonging thereto." In Henry IV.'s time "Plumpton-fields," as it was then called, consisted of one hundred acres of land, forty acres of wood, and forty acres of moorland."

HASELOUR HALL.

The Eve of Bosworth Field: Richmond's March through Staffordshire.

ALTHOUGH the momentous battle which marked a turning point in the history of our country was fought in a neighbouring shire, many of the chief points of interest are associated with the history of Staffordshire, notably the fact that Henry Richmond's forces marched through our county, and twice, at least, on their way to the scene of the conflict, pitched their camp within its borders, and the preliminaries on the part of Richmond were deliberated upon and arranged therein. About the same time that Sir William Stanley, with his Cheshire forces, had marched towards Stafford, halting at the old stronghold at Newcastle, Henry had landed with his followers at Milford Haven, and from thence made his way North-Eastward to Shrewsbury, before Richard considered the demonstration of his rival worthy of serious attention. The King was at this time in the north, hence Henry's determination to make his way towards the North Midlands, instead of to London, as he had at first proposed to do; and from Shrewsbury he marched with his forces to Newport, and thence to Stafford. From Stafford, Richmond proceeded to Lichfield, availing himself of the opportunity of augmenting his forces from among the many who were disaffected towards the King. On the 18th of August, 1485, he sent forward his troops to Tamworth, a march of about seven miles. The way led across one end of the open gorsy common called Whittington Heath, and thence on through the overhanging woods of Hopwas, and along the hillside, fragrant with the wild hops which border the roadway and give their name to the village of Hopwas. At this point the broad tower of Tamworth Church would come into view, with the spreading common, which was to be the site of their camp. This was undoubtedly the "plain near Tamworth" of Shakespeare's Richard III. It lay between Coton and Tamworth, and a part of it still exists in the Staffordshire Moor, which is now the only remaining portion of common land on this side of the town. In all probability this moor at that time extended to the roadside leading into Tamworth from Lichfield, and bordered the road for nearly a mile and a half; hence it would be obviously the most suitable place for an encampment of this extent.

And, now, we come to a mysterious and romantic episode in the history of Henry Richmond's progress through the country. It is said that, having sent his troops on to Tamworth, he followed with an escort of twenty light-horsemen, but that on the way between the two towns he lagged behind his escort, and entirely lost sight of them. It was near dark, and as he followed on in order to catch up with his body-guard, he missed his way, and so wandered on, fearing to ask his way or to declare himself, lest he should fall into the hands of Richard's scouts, who were spread throughout the country. He was thus obliged to dismount, and conceal himself. When day broke he made his way quickly to Tamworth, where he was received with great satisfaction by his followers, who had been greatly perturbed at his prolonged absence. Henry, we are told, considered it impolitic to tell the true story of his adventure, lest it might damp the ardour of his soldiery, and, therefore, said that he had turned aside to an appointed tryst to receive important intelligence from his secret friends.

Such is the commonly accepted version of this story, but there is reason to believe that Henry's explanation to his followers was the true one. The road from Lichfield to Tamworth is perfectly straight and plain, up to within a mile and a half of the latter place, and from that point the plain on which Henry's forces were encamped would lie before him, while the church and castle of Tamworth, as well as the town itself, would be plainly visible. Moreover, Henry was not the man to court danger by needlessly severing himself from his escort in an unknown district. It is more than probable, therefore, that he turned aside, as he himself said, to confer with his friends. Elford was at that time the property of the near kinsmen of Thomas, Lord Stanley, who had become the third husband of Henry's mother, Margaret Beaufort; and this place might easily be reached by the royal

C. E. Weale, Tamworth.

"THE SLANG OAK," NEAR ELFORD.*

(*Said to have been in existence over a thousand years.*)

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* We are indebted to H. Paget, Esq., of Elford, for the following description of this interesting old tree, which must have been in its prime when Sir John Stanley lived at the Old Manor House of Elford:—"The 'Slang Oak' is situated in a field about 1¼ miles from the village of Elford, and about a mile from the Old Manor House, which was turned into a farm when the Manor House was moved nearer the river. The exact date of this change is not known, but it was probably prior to the reign of Henry VIII. This old tree undoubtedly, was one of those which stood in the Deer Park which in those days surrounded the Manor House."

wanderer, by diverging from the main road, either at Whittington Heath, nearly a mile from the village of Whittington, or at Coton, near Hopwas, where the bend occurs in the road to Tamworth, by way of Comberford. Is it not probable, therefore, as Dr. Shirley Palmer suggested,* "that the noble lady (Margaret) would, with the natural anxiety of a mother, repair thither to meet and embrace the son, whom the result of the approaching conflict would either elevate to a throne, or consign to eternal exile, or a violent and perhaps ignominious death?" Perhaps at this meeting he may have received intimation of the tryst at Atherstone where the Stanleys—Thomas and William—were to meet him on the following day.

On his arrival at Tamworth, it is said, he found his followers in a state of panic at his prolonged absence; and to make known to the people that he had arrived in safety, he rode publicly through the streets of the town. Having thus allayed their fears, he again left his troops, and repaired to Atherstone with a few chosen friends as his escort, to meet his stepfather, Lord Stanley, and Sir William Stanley, in order to devise plans with regard to the impending battle. This memorable meeting is said by Hutton to have taken place in a little field called the Hall Close, "situated one hundred yards behind the 'Three Tuns,' joining the Coleshill Road on the left, through which the canal now passes."

Conflicting statements render it difficult to decide whether Henry returned again to Tamworth, or whether, being some seven or eight miles nearer to the opposing force, he "slept one night at least at Atherstone," as Hutton says he did, and was there joined by his followers, and proceeded on his way towards Bosworth Field. Shakespeare accepts the general statement that he returned again with his escort to Tamworth, and makes him refer to his conference with the Stanleys in that stirring address to his soldiers on the "plain near Tamworth," which is the scene of Act v., Scene ii., of his "Richard the Third." He says :—

"Fellows in arms, and my most loving friends,
Bruised underneath the yoke of tyranny,
Thus far into the bowels of the land

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* In the appendix the "History of Tamworth," by C. F. Palmer, 1845, p. lxii.

Have we march'd on without impediment,
And here receive we from our father Stanley
Lines of fair comfort and encouragement.
The wretched, bloody, and usurping boar,
That spoil'd your summer fields and fruitful vines,
Swills your warm blood like wash, and makes his trough
In your embowell'd bosoms, this foul swine
Lies now even in the centre of this isle,
Near to the town of Leicester, as we learn:
From Tamworth thither is but one day's march.
In God's name, cheerly on, courageous friends,
To reap the harvest of perpetual peace
By this one bloody trial of sharp war."

Saturday, August 20th, was spent in marching, by way of Fenny Drayton, to Shenton. Here the opposing forces lay encamped in sight of each other all through the ensuing Sunday. On the following morning, Monday, August 22nd, 1485, the two armies met in conflict on the plain called Redmore, three miles from Bosworth and eleven from Leicester. Although so many of Richard's followers had deserted him, the Stanleys and their forces, to all outwardly seeming, still stood loyally by him, as in glittering panoply, he rode forth to meet the Welshman—the "paltry fellow," whose power to harm him he had so contemptuously discredited. But at the outset of the conflict Thomas, Lord Stanley, abandoned the King; and when in the crisis of the battle Sir William Stanley passed over to Richmond's side, the desperate King, with a cry of "treason! treason!" plunged into the thickest of the fight, towards where the Lancastrian standard floated proudly in the breeze, and fell in the very presence of his hated rival, slain, it is said, by a Rudyard, of Rudyard in Staffordshire. His crown, all battered and bloodstained, was found under a hawthorn bush, and was brought thence by Sir William Stanley, and placed on the head of Henry Richmond, amid the cheering of the soldiery who had followed him on his weary march from Milford Haven "thus far into the bowels of the land."

"The shouts that rent the air when Stanley placed the battered crown upon his (Henry's) head, after the bloody day at Bosworth, were not only the expressions of joy and triumph on the completion of a well-won victory, they were the words of consolation and hope, which the nation dared now to utter, after many years' civil distraction and strife, brought to an end by the death of the last of the Plantagenets, who if he lived an ambitious tyrant, died at least a brave and gallant soldier." *

For in this rude coronation scene, amid the carnage of the battle-field, the Wars of the Roses, which had for 30 years divided England into two opposing camps of Lancastrians and Yorkists, came to an end, and that illustrious reign was inaugurated in which was witnessed the revival of learning and of the arts of peace, and the end of the dark ages of mediæval ignorance.

Henry was not slow to reward those who had helped him or who had rallied to his standard in the march from Milford Haven, and in the long list of grants made by him to his supporters during the first year of his reign are not a few Staffordshire manors, offices, and emoluments. A few of these may be enumerated. To his step-father, Thomas, Lord Stanley, he granted the offices of steward and master of the chase of Sutton, with the keepership of the forest there, in the counties of Warwick and Stafford, with the appointment of all inferior officers; also the office of "master forester and steward of all the game northwards beyond Trent." To Elizabeth Woodville, the widowed queen of Edward IV., whose daughter he afterwards married, he granted a long list of fees from holders of crown properties, and among them "116s. out of the farm of the moiety of the town of Tamworth." To Humphrey Stanley he gave "the custody of the herbage and pannage of the hays of Allerwas (Alrewas), Chesteleyn, Oggeley, Ganneley, and Bentley, within the Forest of Cannock;" also the offices of steward of the town of Walsall, and parker of the park of Walsall. To Sir James Blount, "for his services in the kingdom of England, and in the parts beyond the sea," Henry gave the offices of steward and Surveyor of the honor, castle, and lordship of Tutbury, and constable of all the lordships and manors on the same honor; also the office of master forester or warden and keeper of all the forests and chases belonging or pertaining thereto. Among other Staffordshire grants made by Henry, we find two appointments to the hospital of St. John the

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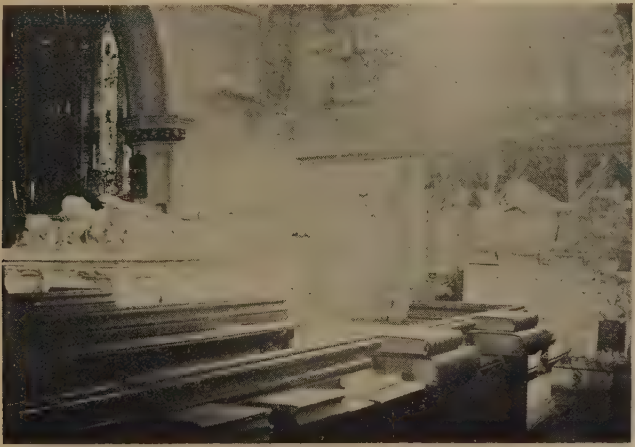
* *Introduction to* "Materials for a History of the Reign of Henry VII." Edited by the Rev. W. Campbell, 1873.

Baptist at Stafford, the one of John Menwarying, chaplain, "to have custody of the hospital," and the other of "Master John Browne, one of the masters in Chancery, of the Free Chapel beside the town of Stafford, called the Chapel of St. John." "To William Chetwyn of Ingestie, co. Stafford, Esq," he gave the office of "parker or keeper of le Lytyll Park and de la More Park, called Stafford Parks," also the lease of two watermills in Stafford. Nor did he allow the services of his humbler followers to go unrewarded. To Richard Stapull and Thomas Gaywode, two of the yeomen of the guard, he gave to the first the office of Bailiff of Walsall, and to the second the offices of Porter of Stafford Castle and Bailiff of 'Mawdeley' (Madeley), and Borlestone, in the same county. To John Holford he gave the office of Bailiff of Newcastle-under-Lyme, and to John Badely, son of Henry Badely, the presbytery of the Hospital of St. Leo in the same town. To John Wylde he gave the office of Bailiff of Tutbury and the custody of the park called the Castelhay; and to Thomas Burneby an annuity of ten marks out of the revenues of Tutbury. These may suffice as examples of the rewards by the victor in whose person the throne reverted once more and finally to the House of Lancaster.



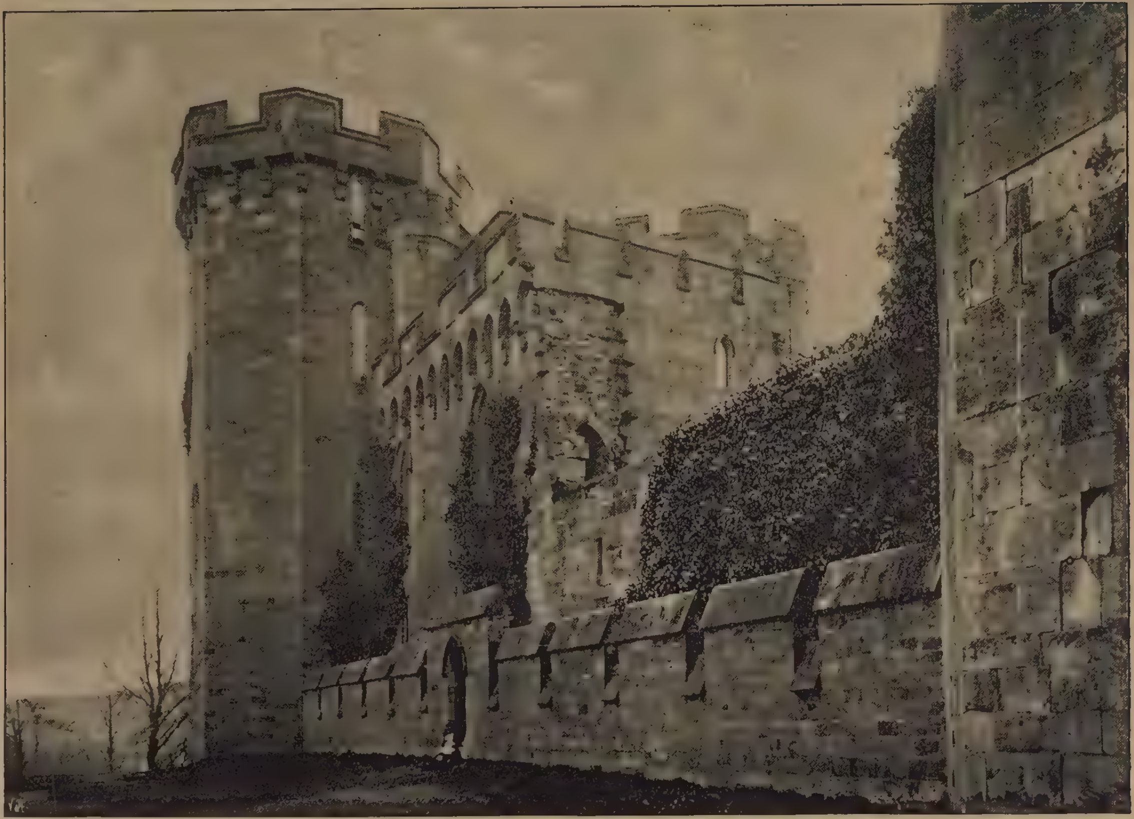
ELFORD CHURCH.
Tombs of the Ardernes and Stanleys.

OLD IRON GATE
BRIDGE·STREET
STAFFORD

The Noble House of Stafford.

IN the year 1444, or nearly four centuries after the first Norman King had made his follower, Robert de Tonéi, the feudal lord of our county town, Humphry, Earl of Stafford, the eleventh in descent from de Tonéi, and described in that year as the Right Mighty Prince Humphry, Earl of Buckingham, Hereford, Stafford, Northampton, and Perche, Lord of Brecknock and Holderness, was, for his great services to Henry VI., created Duke of Buckingham, with precedence over all other dukes.

A reference to the pedigree will show the alliance of the Staffords with the equally ancient Staffordshire houses of the Bagots, the Bassets and the Camvilles of Clifton; from the latter connection descended the Ardens and Stanleys of Elford. Another offshoot of the stock produced John, Archbishop of Canterbury (*temp.* Henry VI.), and also the two Staffords made famous by Shakespeare in their engagement with Jack Cade and his



D. Bordley, Stafford.

STAFFORD CASTLE.

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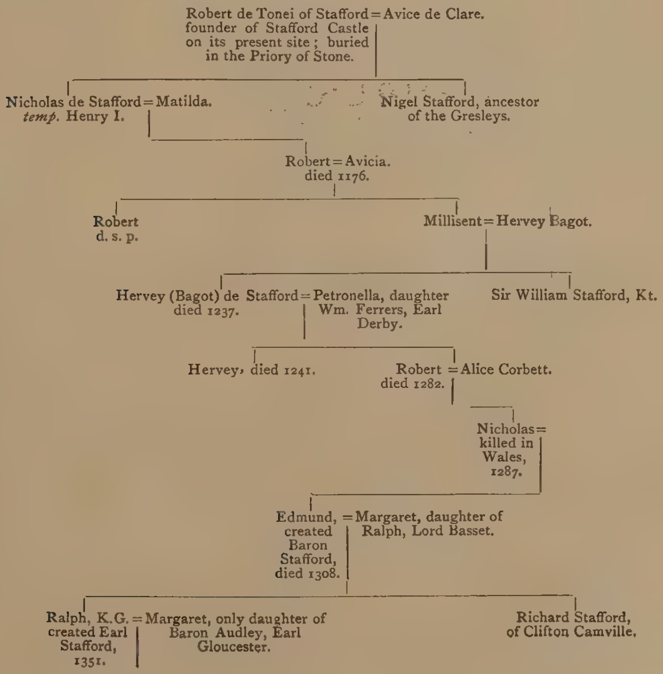
followers, and whose descendants became Earls of Devon; again, by other younger sons, the earldom of Wiltshire and the barony of Bourchier were added to the honours of the Staffords.

Other Norman families achieved high rank and power with greater rapidity, but the rise of the Staffords was more steadily maintained. Edmund, the seventh in descent from Tonéi, was in 1299 created Baron Stafford, and his son Ralph, Earl Stafford and K.G.; the latter married the heiress of the Earl of Gloucester, and re-built the Castle of Stafford, whilst his two sons, the ninth in descent, married, the one, a daughter of Henry Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster, sister of Blanche, the wife of John of Gaunt; and the other son, Hugh (second Earl), a daughter of the Earl of Warwick. All these Staffords were famous in war, and had fought in Scotland and Wales, at Cressy, and in the Holy Land.


Robert de Tonei of Stafford = Avice de Clare.
founder of Stafford Castle on its present site; buried in the Priory of Stone.
Nicholas de Stafford = Matilda.
temp. Henry I.
Nigel Stafford, ancestor of the Gresleys.
Robert = Avicia.
died 1176.
Robert
d. s. p.
Millisent = Hervey Bagot.
Hervey (Bagot) de Stafford = Petronella, daughter Wm. Ferrers, Earl Derby.
died 1237.
Sir William Stafford, Kt.
Hervey, died 1241.
Robert = Alice Corbett.
died 1282.
Nicholas =
killed in Wales, 1287.
Edmund, = Margaret, daughter of Ralph, Lord Basset.
created Baron Stafford, died 1308.
Ralph, K.G. = Margaret, only daughter of Baron Audley, Earl Gloucester.
created Earl Stafford, 1351.
Richard Stafford, of Clifton Camville.

Ralph, K.G. (Son of Edmund) = Margaret

Ralph, d. s. p. = Maud, daughter Henry of Lancaster, Earl Derby.
*Hugh, 2nd Earl, Crusader, died 1386. = Phillipa, daughter Earl Warwick.
Margaret, married Sir John Stafford, ancestor Earls of Devon.

Ralph, murdered 1385.
Thomas, 3rd Earl d. s. p. 1392. = Lady Anne Plantagenet, daughter of Thomas of Woodstock, Duke Gloucester.
William, 4th Earl d. s. p. 1395.
Edmund, 5th Earl, killed at Shrewsbury, 1403. = Lady Anne, his brother's widow.
Hugh, killed at Shrewsbury, 1403.
Several daughters.

Humphry, 6th Earl created Duke of Buckingham, 1444; killed at Northampton, 1460. = Lady Ann Nevill, daughter of Ralph, Earl Westmoreland.
Anne, married 1st, Edmund, Earl Mortimer; 2nd, John Holland, Earl Huntingdon.

Humphrey killed at S. Albans, 1455. = Margaret, daughter of Edmund, Duke Somerset.
John, Earl of Wiltshire.
Sir Henry = Margaret, daughter of John, Duke Somerset, widow Edmund Tudor, and mother Henry VII.

Henry, 2nd Duke, beheaded at Salisbury, 1483. = Catherine Rivers sister of Elizabeth, Queen of Edward IV.
Catherine = John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury.

Edward, restored Duke of Buckingham, beheaded on Tower Hill, 1521. = Lady Alianore Percy, daughter of Henry, Earl Northumberland.
Henry, Earl of Wiltshire.

Henry, restored in blood as Lord Stafford, 1547, with Stafford Castle; died 1562. = Ursula, daughter of Sir Richard Pole and Margaret Plantagenet, and sister of Cardinal Pole.
Elizabeth, married Duke Norfolk.
Catherine, married Earl Westmoreland.
Mary, married Lord Bergavenny.

Edward, died 1603. = Mary, daughter of Edward, Earl Derby.
Richard Stafford = *alias* Floyde.
Walter.
Dorothy.

Edward, died 1625. = †Isabel Forster.
Ursula = Walter Erdeswick.
Dorothy.
Roger Stafford.
Jane Stafford.

Edward died before his father. = Anne Wilford.

Henry, d. s. p. 1637.
Mary = Sir William Howard, son of Earl Arundel.

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* Died at Rhodes returning from the Holy Land, and buried at the Priory of Stone. Leland says: "There wer dyverse tumbes of the lordes of Stafford in Stone Priory, made of alabaster. The images that lay on them were, after the suppression of the house, caryed to the Freers Augustine in Forebridge, *alias* Stafford grene."

† Said to have been his mother's chambermaid. She was the "ould Ladye Stafford" who defended Stafford Castle in 1643.

The children of Hugh, tenth in descent, were—*first*, Ralph, murdered in 1385, by John Holland, half-brother of Richard II.; *second*, Thomas, the third Earl, who married Anne, daughter of Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester; *third*, William, the fourth Earl (the latter two dying young); *fourth*, Edmund the fifth Earl, who, in 1398, married Anne, widow of his brother Thomas; and *fifth*, Hugh. Both Edmund and Hugh were killed at Shrewsbury, 1403, fighting for Henry IV. Of the daughters, Margaret became the wife of Ralph Nevill, the powerful Earl of Westmoreland, whilst others married Michael de la Pole, Thomas, Earl of Kent, and John, Lord Ferrers of Chartley.

When Earl Edmund was slain at Shrewsbury, his only son, Humphry, was an infant, whose active life began only with the accession of the sixth Henry. Throughout his life he was a Lancastrian, notwithstanding his having married the Earl of Westmoreland's daughter, the Lady Anne Nevill. This lady being sister to "the Rose of Raby" and to the Earl of Salisbury, was consequently aunt to Edward IV., and to "The King Maker."

In 1444, upon occasion of the King's marriage, he was created precedent Duke of Buckingham, and in 1460 was slain at the disastrous battle of Northampton, his eldest son, Humphry, having been killed five years earlier, 1455, at the battle of St. Alban's.

The alliances of the Staffords with the houses of York and Lancaster, have a peculiar interest; whilst Duke Humphry married a Yorkist his two sons married daughters of the Lancastrian Beauforts. Humphry, the elder son, wedded Margaret, daughter of Edmund, fourth Duke of Somerset, she being then the widow of Edmund Tudor, and mother of Henry of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII. Again, Henry the second duke, grandson of Duke Humphry, being ward to Edward IV., was brought up by the King's sister and married to Catherine Rivers, sister of Elizabeth the Queen of Edward IV.

During the twenty years of the Yorkist supremacy, Henry was closely attached to the court, and mainly by his aid Protector Richard was enabled to mount the throne. Richard's son was to have married "high-reaching Buckingham's" daughter, but the son died, and the Duke's sympathies turned towards Henry of Richmond, whom he actively conspired to place on the throne. Betrayed by an old servant of the Stafford family—one Bannister, of Wem—he was beheaded by the wary Richard in Salisbury Market Place, 1483, without trial, and his widow Catherine became the wife of Jasper Tudor, uncle to Henry VII.

The triumph of Bosworth field was also the triumph of the Staffords and the Stanleys, and Edward the son of Henry was speedily restored to the dukedom, and to all the honours of the Staffords. In rank and wealth and greatness the house was now at its zenith. Its decline, however, was to be more rapid than its rise. Duke Edward offended Cardinal Wolsey; the affront is thus related:—The great Churchman dipped his hands into a bason of water, held by the Duke for Henry VIII. Buckingham resented this by pouring the water into the Cardinal's shoes, whereupon Wolsey threatened "to stick to his skirts," and kept his word. Buckingham answered the threat by appearing at Court skirtless, but Wolsey bided his time and eventually effected his object. By the false evidence of a discharged steward, the Duke was charged with treason, an intention to assassinate the King and ascend the throne. Absurd as was the charge, clear as was the refutation, these availed him not. The life of Buckingham's father was lost in helping Richmond to the throne, but Richmond's son, upon a silly pretext, sent Buckingham to the block.

A trite record of this event, which took place 15th May, 1521, is contained in the comment of the German Emperor, Charles V., who upon hearing of the execution, exclaimed: "A butcher's dog has killed the finest buck in England." The King seized the Duke's vast possessions and wealth, and thus for ever destroyed the princely splendour of the great house of Stafford.

The wife of Henry, the son of the last duke, was Ursula, daughter of Sir Richard Pole and Margaret, the last of the Plantagenets, daughter of the Duke of Clarence. After beheading his father, the King granted Henry various Staffordshire Manors. Twenty years later, he also beheaded Margaret, Ursula's mother, and afterwards gave him the castle and town of Stafford, with the title of Lord Stafford. This title continued for four generations in the line of their eldest son, Edward, but on failure in 1637 of the main line it reverted to the family of Richard, their second son, namely, to his son, Roger, then sixty-five years of age, and unmarried. This Roger

STAFFORD. (*From an Old Print.*)

was occupying a very humble position in Shropshire. Early in life he had changed his name to Floyd, having been, it is presumed, reared by a person of that name, a servant in his mother's family. The new Lord Stafford *de jure*, immediately claimed the title. Charles I., however, made a remarkable decision, that inasmuch as he had no estate, he should resign his claim to the barony, and this order was obeyed. On the 7th December, 1639, a formal grant and surrender of the barony was made to the king, who thereupon bestowed the title upon Sir William Howard, who had married a sister of the last lord. With the death of Roger, which took place in the following year, the male line of one of the most ancient and renowned families of England, representative of the great houses of Stafford, Gloucester, Hereford, and Buckingham, descended of the blood royal of England, came to an end, and the vicissitudes of the family was made complete by the fact that Jane Stafford, the only sister of Roger, had married a joiner, and that their son, the fourth in descent from Margaret Plantagenet, and eighteenth from the first Norman Stafford, was a cobbler of old shoes in the little town of Newport eleven miles from the castle of Stafford.

J. Gale, *Wolverhampton.*

STAFFORD CASTLE.

The Collegiate Churches of Staffordshire.

BESIDES the great Cathedral of the Diocese and the several Abbeys and Priories, there were, before the dissolution of the religious houses, six churches in Staffordshire having each a body of canons and prebendaries, and other inferior members, with corporate privileges, known by the name of collegiate, namely those of Tamworth, Wolverhampton, Stafford, Tettenhall, Penkridge, and Gnosall. These were, in point of fact, secular communities bearing a close affinity to the monastic institutions in some respects, and the services and ritual in these churches was maintained after the same manner as those of the Cathedral Church.

The collegiate foundation at Wolverhampton owes its existence to Wulfruna, the sister of Ethelred II., and widow of Duke Alfhelm, who in 996 endowed a monastery in connection with the Church of St. Peter already existing at Wolverhampton,* giving for that purpose land in Arley, Bilston, Willenhall, Wednesfield, Walsall, and other places in the county. Whether this was actually from the first a secular community, as might be the case, even though it bore the monastic name, is not now perhaps ascertainable, but it is certain that at the Conquest such was the case, and that it consisted of a dean, and secular canons or prebendaries, and was granted by the Conqueror, with the lands which it had held since its foundation

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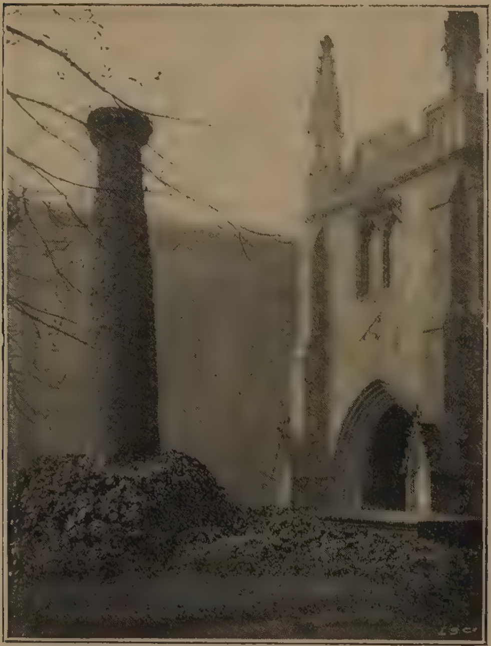
* Wolverhampton is generally supposed to take its name from Wulfruna, who founded and endowed the monastry here by three separate endowments, the first in the year 995; but a church existed here long before that date, for in the *priviligium*, granted by Archbishop Sigene for the erection, by Wulfruna, of a church in honour of the Blessed Virgin, there is a confirmation of the estates which the Church held in former times and moreover Wulfruna is called by Speed, "Inheritrix of the Towne Hampton."

(and which had been confirmed to it by Edward the Confessor) to Sampson, his chaplain, and at the time of the Domesday survey the various properties belonging to the Collegiate Church are set down under his name, which also stands eighth in the schedule of landholders of the county as "Sanson, clericus." After Sampson became Bishop of Worcester, he gave the Church of Wolverhampton, with its collegiate endowments, to "Thomas, the Prior, and his brethern, the monks of Worcester."


J. Gale, Wolverhampton.

ANCIENT SCULPTURED PILLAR IN THE CHURCHYARD OF ST. PETER'S, WOLVERHAMPTON.

The great privileges enjoyed by the prebendaries of this and other collegiate churches were, however, far from conducive to holy living, for as Plot quaintly tells us, "before it had stood near 200 years, these *Prebends* grew so enormous in their lives, as *Petrus Blesensis* (who was their *Dean*) testifies, that their wickedness was made known by *songs* in the streets." The good Dean therefore complained to the King and the Archbishop, and, failing to effect a reformation, resigned his deanery to the King. The Archbishop thereupon endeavoured to establish the Cistercian monks in place of the colllege, and even obtained from King John * liberty to take timber from his forest and hayes, to build the proposed monastery, but died before he could accomplish his project;

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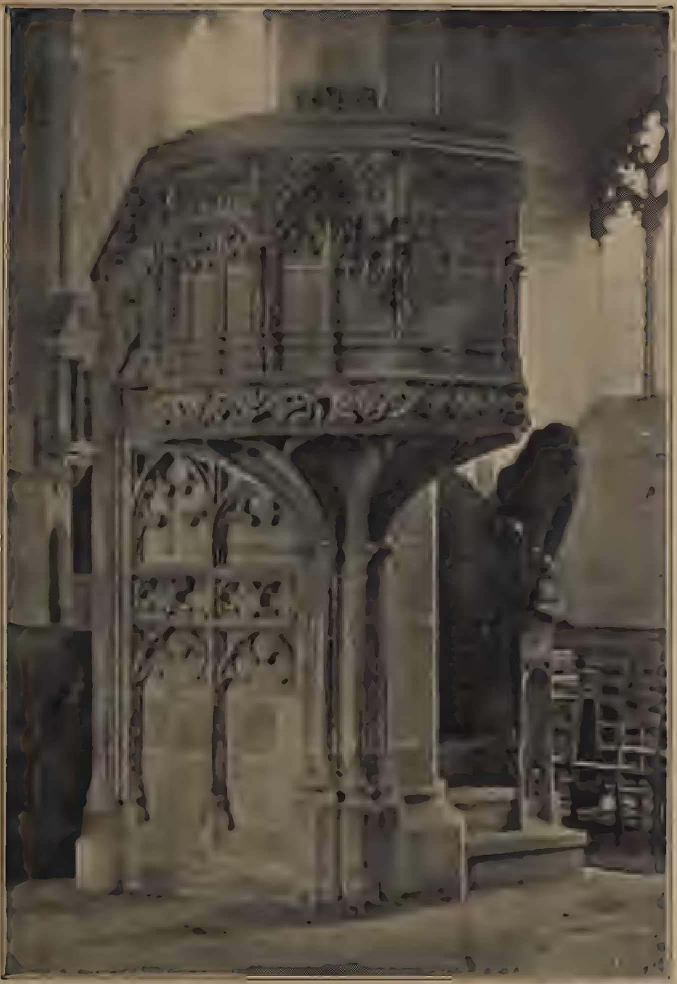
* In King John's frequent visits to Staffordshire, Brewood was one of his resting places.



J. Gale, [illegible]

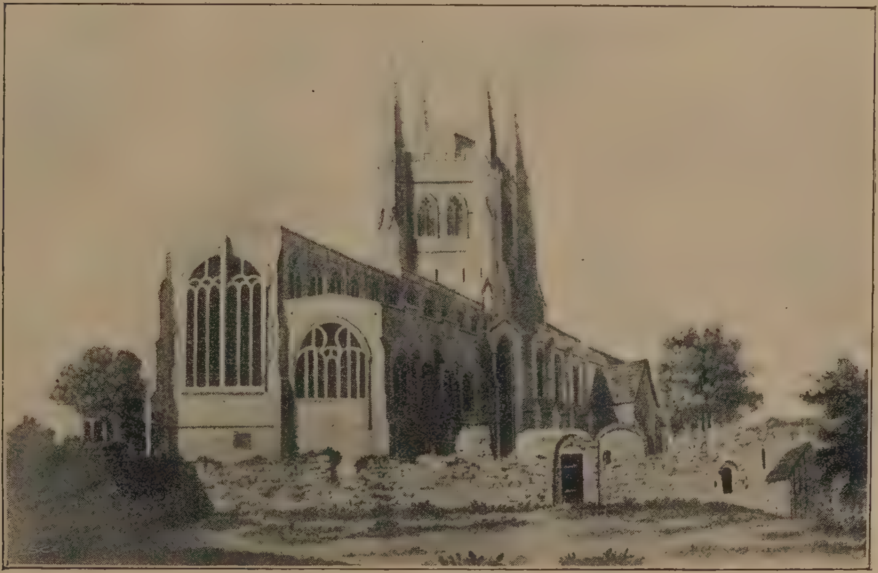
STONE PULPIT, WOLVERHAMPTON CHURCH.

and so the college continued to hold its possessions, and in the next mention of it we find Giles de Erdington as its dean (42 Henry III.), to whom that king granted a charter for a market upon Wednesday in every week, and an eight days' fair, commencing on the eve and day of the Apostles Peter and Paul.

In the reign of Edward II., that monarch, taking great delight in his castle at Windsor, and being minded to advance the revenues belonging to St. George's Chapel, annexed the revenues of the college and free chapel of Wolverhampton to the Windsor Chapel, so that the Dean of the Chapel of St. George should hereafter be Dean of the Collegiate Church of Wolverhampton. To this royal chapel the rich endowments given by Wulfruna to "Hamtone" have belonged ever since, save for a short interval, during which they were held by the powerful and unscrupulous John, Duke of Northumberland, but reverted, after his downfall, by grant of Queen Mary to the Dean and Chapter of Windsor. "In this condition," says Shaw, "it hath continued to the present day, subject to no earthly power but the King of England, and under it to the perpetual visitation of the Keeper of the Great Seal for the time being."

The church itself is a noble monument of this ancient foundation. Built in the reign of Edward III., it is a spacious cruciform edifice in the early decorated style, with a square embattled tower rising from the centre, the upper part of which is a very fine specimen of later decorated work. One of the most interesting features of the interior is the finely-carved stone pulpit, of the Perpendicular period, which is supported by a single shaft, and approached by a circular staircase, which winds round one of the nave piers. In the churchyard is a very curiously-carved pillar, with figures of strange beasts, flowers, and birds, which resembles somewhat a similar pillar at Leek. Both are, in all probability, fragments of old churchyard crosses.

The founder of the collegiate church of Tamworth was King Edgar, who about the year 963 re-founded the church after the devastation of the town by Olaf and his Viking hosts, and gave it a college of canons, probably by way of raising a lasting monument to the pious Eadgyth or Editha, to whom the church was thereafter dedicated. This foundation was further enriched by Wulfric Spot, the founder of Burton Abbey, who, by his will, left an estate at Longden, in Staffordshire, to the Convent* at Tamworth and the monks of Burton, each to have an equal share of its products.



OLD VIEW OF TAMWORTH CHURCH (*From Shaw's Staffordshire*).
Showing the ruined walls of the old Deanery.

The Dean and Chapter of Tamworth held many endowments, and among others the tolls of the three great fairs, while the bailiffs claimed those of the markets. They were also lords of the Manor of Middleton, Warwickshire, and they purchased the advowson of the church of the same manor.

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* This word convent was as Palmer, the historian of Tamworth, points out, often used for any body of men, whether regular or secular; but it may be that for a short period the occupants of the college were regular clergy, that is to say monks, as the Archbishop of that time gave most of the Church offices to the regular clergy. A short time after the Conquest, however, the dean and the canons of Tamworth were secular.

The college consisted of six prebendaries with the dean, and their chief duty was to celebrate mass with all solemnities, and to say the Canonical Hours publicly every day. The deanery was situated eastward of the churchyard, and its walls were still standing when Shaw published his "History of Staffordshire." Some portions probably still stand, as they did, at any rate, within the memory of the present writer. A mansion house for the priests of the college stood in College Lane, on the site of the present National School, being given to the college by Henry Jekes, one of the High Bailiffs.

Of the ancient church of St. Editha, thus founded as the seat of a secular college, little remains except the crypt and the two fine Norman transept-arches; for on Trinity Monday, 1345, the church was destroyed by fire; and with the ancient fabric passed away many interesting memorials of its ancient founders and benefactors. The work of re-building sorely taxed the resources of the Dean and Chapter, and the aid of the King (Henry VI.) was subsequently invoked to enable them to carry on the work of the church. In response, Henry established a perpetual chantry (1445-6) giving for its maintenance a fee-farm rent of 116s. a year, which had hitherto been yielded to the crown. He further granted to the Vicars Choral and Chaplains a tun of red wine every year out of the royal wines in the port of Bristol, "so that the people might oftener and more diligently draw nigh unto the venerable Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ."

Many quaint customs and institutions were maintained under the *régime* of the College in Tamworth. We read of the public declaration of the Assize of Bread in the church on Relic Sunday, when the High Bailiffs and Serjeants at Mace attended in "great procession;" also of mystery plays performed (probably in one of the chantry chapels) on Corpus Christi day;* and it is not improbable (from certain indications in the construction of the battlements of the tower) that services similar to that which was performed on May Morning on Magdalen Tower, at Oxford, were occasionally performed on "the broad tower of Tamworth Church."

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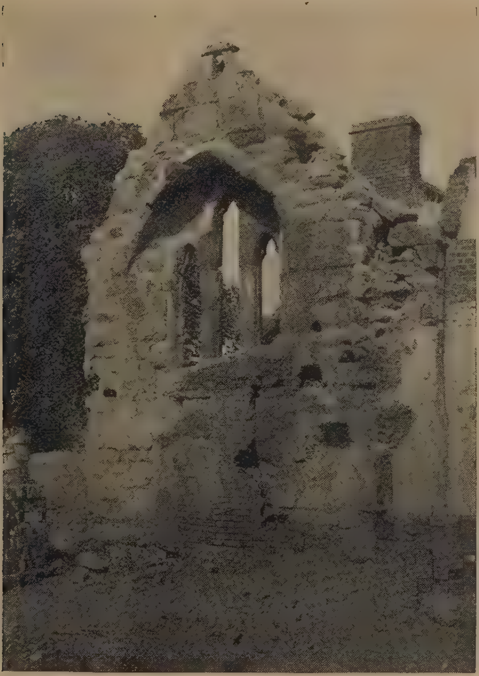
* Palmer, in his History of Tamworth Church, gives extracts from the depositions in a charge against Sir Humfrey Ferrers for assaulting (by proxy) one of the performers in the Tamworth Mystery Play. It was urged in defence that the man, who personated the devil, and had great chains about him, had struck the knight with his chains as he went about in the throng.

At the dissolution of the college, the commissioners reported fully on the value of the plate and possessions of the college. The Dean, Simon Symons, and the prebendaries and lay vicars received pensions or compensations, and the endowments — or most of them — were seized by the crown. But many smaller endowments —for obits, lamps, lights, &c. —were withheld, and were not discovered and claimed by the crown until the reign of Elizabeth. The church, as rebuilt after the fire in 1345, consisted of a nave and chancel, with nave aisles, and a chantry chapel on the north side of the chancel, which appertained to the Guild of St. George, and is now known as St. George's Chapel. The fine Norman arches of the transept are relics of the older church, and the broad, massive tower at the western end is famous from its curious double staircase, whereby two persons might reach the battlements at the top, the one from the outside and the other from within, without meeting or seeing each other till they reached the top. The marvel-loving Plot describes this as "the most unusual piece of *stone-work*, and the most extraordinary



W. E. Weale, *Tamworth.*

"THE SPITAL," TAMWORTH.

Nothing seems to have been recorded respecting this interesting old ruin. From its name and situation outside the town, however, it is in all probability the *Sanatorium* which was built in 1345, during the great pestilence which carried off a third of the population. It may have continued to be used afterwards as a hospital by the Guild of St. George or some other semi-religious brotherhood.

of any piece of *ecclesiastical* building that I have anywhere met with," and he conceives the purpose of its construction to have been "that the *Deacons*, or *Sacrists*, that made the *responses*, and took care of the *vestments* and *utensills* of the church, might doe their duties apart, each having by this means the power of the *steeple* without troubling the other. Or else that the *clock-keeper* might execute his *office* without troubling either of them."

The Church of St. Mary at Stafford may probably be considered third in order of importance among Staffordshire Collegiate Churches. It was given by King Stephen to the Bishop and See of Lichfield some time previous to the year 1136; but at a later date the patronage reverted to the crown as a "royal free chapel"—a term often applied to collegiate churches generally—and, in 1445, it was granted by Henry VI. to Humphrey, Duke of Buckingham. The college consisted, according to Tanner's "Notitia," of a dean and thirteen prebendaries; and at one time, we read, the "Dean of the King's Chapel of St. Mary at Stafford" exercised the right of presentation to the Church of Tixall.*

An interesting reference to a proposed visitation of this church occurs in the transcript of Bishop Norbury's Register (1322-1358), in the Salt Society's Collections. Under date 1322, the Bishop records the revocation of a visitation he had intended to make to the Dean of Stafford, which, he says, "must he put off on account of the muster to repel Scotch invasion, the people being drawn off to follow their feudal lords to war."†

The church is an ancient fabric, in which are some fragments of the more ancient Saxon Church which preceded it. It consists of a nave, two side aisles, a transept, and a chancel of three aisles, the style of architecture being generally Early Pointed. The font in this church is worthy of special notice. It consists of three orders; the lowest, a group of figures of apes, prone, supporting a tablet over which are four lions, who in turn support the font itself, which consists of four semi-globes, with various figures between each. The effect of the whole is grotesque and unecclesiastical.

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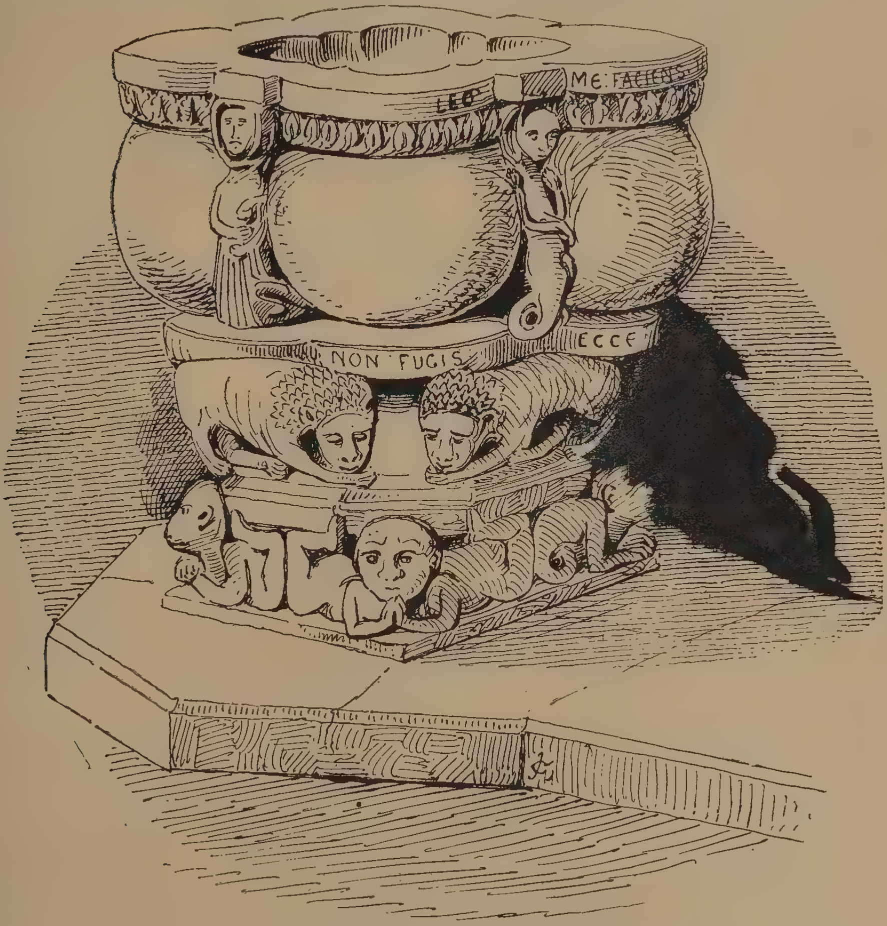
* Coram Rege Roll 31, H. iii. (Quoted in "Salt Society's Collections," vol. i.)

† "Salt Society's Collection," i., 248.

There seems to have been a college at Tettenhall before the Conquest, as in Domesday a portion of this parish is recorded, under the name of Totenhale clericorum, among the lands belonging to the clergy of Wolverhampton. There were four prebends, viz.—Tettenhall, Perton, Wrottesley,



ANCIENT FONT IN ST. MARY'S, STAFFORD.

and Pendeford. There is very little to be learned respecting this collegiate institution, Shaw being apparently unable to record anything except the mention of its existence by Leland aud Speed, and the fact that some remains of the college formerly existed near the east end of the church. After the suppression of the college, the church lands became the property of the Wrottesley family.

The collegiate church of Penkridge was founded by King John, the grant of the same to the See of Dublin bearing date 13th September, 1206. The Archbishop of Dublin was its Dean, and the prebendaries were attached to Dunston, Coppenhall, Shareshill, and Stretton. According to Dugdale (*Monasticon Anglicanum*) "King Edward II., in the eleventh year of his reign, declared that the chapel at *Pencriz* and others were his free chapels,* and as such, exempt from all ordinary jurisdiction, impositions, exactions, and contributions, and accordingly ordained that none should presume to encroach upon their immunities." The church is principally in the later English style, and has a fine tower, also a very fine east window, in the Decorated style. After the suppression of the college the advowson came into the hands of the Littleton family, of whom there are several interesting monuments in the church.

The church of Gnosall was given by King Stephen to the See of Lichfield, but afterwards became a royal free chapel, or collegiate church, having an establishment of secular canons, of which, at the time of the dissolution, the bishop of Lichfield was titular dean, but with no profits attaching to the office. There were four prebendaries, namely—Chiltrenhall, Baverly-Hall, Mordhall, and Suckerhall.

The church is large and interesting. It consists of a nave and chancel with two aisles to each, and transepts or cross-aisles—thus forming a cross, from the centre of which rises a tower, the lower part of which, according to Pitt, is Saxon. The church is early English, with decorated windows in the western end, and the western arch is decorated with flat receding chevron mouldings.

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* This appears to have been the case with all the chapels attached to Collegiate Churches.

The Legend of Ludchurch.

THERE are few wilder spots in England than the district surrounding Ludchurch. Within the space of a few miles are tremendous cliffs and huge rocks, rugged and terrific in aspect, sweeping tracts of moorland and peat, alternating with woodland and river. From mountain heights, giving views of boundless expanse, to the soft and varied charms of Dane-side or the Black brook is less than an hour's walk. Here, in the heart of England, not only is the red grouse abundant but nearly every English game bird is to be found; here the speckled trout is found in as picturesque bits of river scenery as fisherman can desire. The trophies of the chase adorning the hall of Squire Brocklehurst, the lord of this district of English sport, attest that splendid specimens of the fallow deer yet roam at large upon the territory which forms a part of the once famous deer forest of Leek, whilst partridges, snipe, pewits, woodcocks, and even curlews and plovers still frequent the hills and valleys of this favoured district.

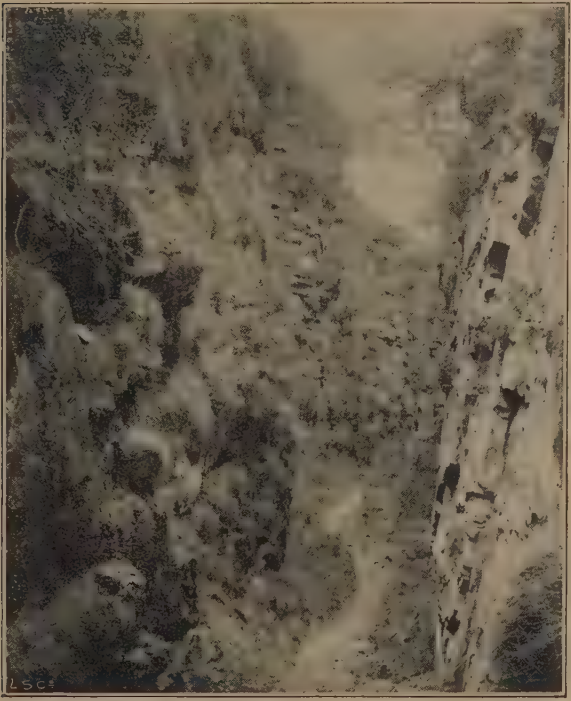
Although Ludchurch is visited from Buxton, Macclesfield, Leek, and Rudyard, it is best reached by pedestrians from Rushton Station, a mile from the north end of Rudyard Lake.

From whatever point the remarkable chasm is approached, striking and unexpected scenes are passed, and the difficulty of reaching it unaided adds not a little to the enjoyment of the visit. By tortuous paths through the woods fringing the Dane banks from the west, the remarkable Hanging-Stone on the crest of a pine-covered hill is passed; from the east the road through the back forest passes a castle-shaped cluster of rocks, called the

Castle Cliffs. Either way footpaths somewhat difficult to find must be gained, and, when least expected, some tree-hidden miniature cliffs guide the visitor to the rocky, arch-like entrance to the temple of the moorlands.

Here is a portal untouched by the restorer's hand. The work of the Great Architect has not been "improved" by rector, churchwarden or archæologist, and debate as to its order, be it Saxon or Norman, British or Roman, has been avoided. Within, the walls rise in rugged grandeur in places to a height of seventy feet; every chink and crevice and crack is beautified with the growth of tree or fern or tufted grass; oak, ash, holly, and shrub contribute minute specimens for perpetual adornment, and their varied foliage adds to the shade and silent beauty of the scene. Steps of stone afford easy access to the varying levels of the flooring; the tops of the almost perpendicular walls in places nearly touch each other, and the lighting is wholly from the sky.

W. H. Horne, *Leek.*
RUDYARD LAKE.



LUDCHURCH.

There is a charm about Ludchurch which under any circumstaness would be irresistible, but with the memory of its surroundings, and its complete isolation from the busy world, with the mystery of its beginning and the uncertainty of its ending, with the knowledge that still lower in unfathomable depths its narrowing limits extend far away, no one knows where,* one is impelled to a solemn feeling of admiration for this wondrous work of nature.

That a country possessing all these characteristics of wildness, with a sparse population of impressionable and superstitious people, should have its remarkable traditions and romantic stories is to be expected; that Robin Hood found shelter and safety within its friendly walls will not be doubted. One of these long-surviving stories is, however, so romantic and charming in its detail as almost to atone for some want of authenticity in its origin. It is the story of a certain Knight, William de Lacy, a visitor in the summer of 1546 to the mansion of his old friend Trafford, of Swythomlee. Sir William describes the scenic beauties of the landscape, the hills, forest, and rivers as he rides forth towards Buckstone.* On his way he witnesses a desperate combat between a powerful wolf and a goat, ending in the death of the wolf, within the walls of a gloomy, narrow glen. The damp walls of this glen are of considerable height, their tops being overgrown with trees, causing a deep gloom and extreme stillness, and impress him with solemn awe. Returning hence Sir William encounters an aged man reading his Bible whilst seated beneath a lofty oak, and from him learns "*The Legend of Ludchurch.*"

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* Adventurous explorers, among others one William Mills, with the aid of a ball of twine and a lantern have penetrated the cavern to a great distance, until they could hear the noise of flowing water, and concluded it extended beneath the Dane.

A small band of devoted followers of Wyckliffe preaching their doctrine in the district, selected the cavern-like ravine as a safe retreat, and here conducted their devotional services, of which singing was a prominent feature. The chief Lollard was an aged minister, one Walter de Lud-auk, and among his followers were his grand daughter Alice, a lovely and graceful girl of eighteen, endowed with a matchless voice, and Henrich Montair, the gigantic and handsome head forester of the district, who preserved and fed them in their concealment from the emissaries of the Church, who sought their capture. Upon the occasion of an impressive service, when the voice of the beautiful girl rang through the vaulted chamber, the tramp of soldiers and noise of arms was heard, and they were called upon to yield. The hardy forester defended the entrance to the passage, and called upon his comrades to escape. A bullet whistled past his ear, a loud shriek followed. Alice de Lud-auk, the lovely singer, had received the deadly bullet in her bosom, and lay in the arms of her grandsire.

Lashed into a fury of wild desperation, the powerful forester dealt death blows at his adversaries, and the bereaved worshippers commenced a solemn dirge over the form of the lovely girl. Swelling in rich and mournful strains the death song as it rolled forth stilled the clash of arms; the rough soldiers were touched, and grouped around in silence. A grave was dug without the walls of the temple beneath the shadow of the oak. With a short and fervid prayer the body was committed to the earth, and the whole party submitted themselves prisoners. On their way to London, realising the danger incurred by his violence, Montair was induced to escape to France, whilst the rest underwent imprisonment.

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* Buxton—formerly Bawketsanes, probably from Badestanes—was called Buckstones in Dr. Jones's work of 1572.

One portion of the romantic chasm has long borne the name of "Trafford's Leap." A predecessor of the present lord, one of the Trafford family, known as the Old Squire, came suddenly whilst hunting upon the brink of the ravine. He urged his horse to attempt the frightful leap, which was successfully accomplished and his life saved, although several of his dogs were killed.

The wonder-loving Dr. Plot relates a story in that remarkable work, "The Natural History of Staffordshire" (1686) which must not be omitted:—"The stupendous cleft in the rock between Swythamley and Wharnford, commonly called Ludchurch, which I found by measure 208 yards long and at different places 30, 40, or 50 foot deep, the sides steeped, and so hanging over that it sometimes preserves snow all the summer, whereof they had signal proof at the town of Leek on the 17th of July, their Fair Day, at which time of year a Wharnford man brought a sack of snow thence and poured it down at the Mercat Cross, telling the people that if anybody wanted of that commodity he could quickly help them to a 100 load on't."

Chetwynd and Stanley.

THE succession of stately domains, Wolseley, Shugborough, Tixall, Ingestre, Chartley, and Sandon, comprised within eight or nine miles of the valley of the Trent, are such that few counties can rival. The natural scenery of this part of the river valley, with its beautiful woodland and sloping hills, survivals of the fringe of Cannock and Needwood, where wild moorland and majestic trees intermingled, is enhanced by the picturesque parks and princely mansions of various great and historic families.

Contiguous to these lordly demesne lands, when the Wars of the Roses came to an end, were extensive heaths and commons stretching far towards the county town. Of these Hopton Heath, Salt Heath, and Tixall Heath were notoriously dangerous districts, and, in the year 1492, Tixall Heath was the scene of an assassination of a peculiarly brutal character.

SHUGBOROUGH.

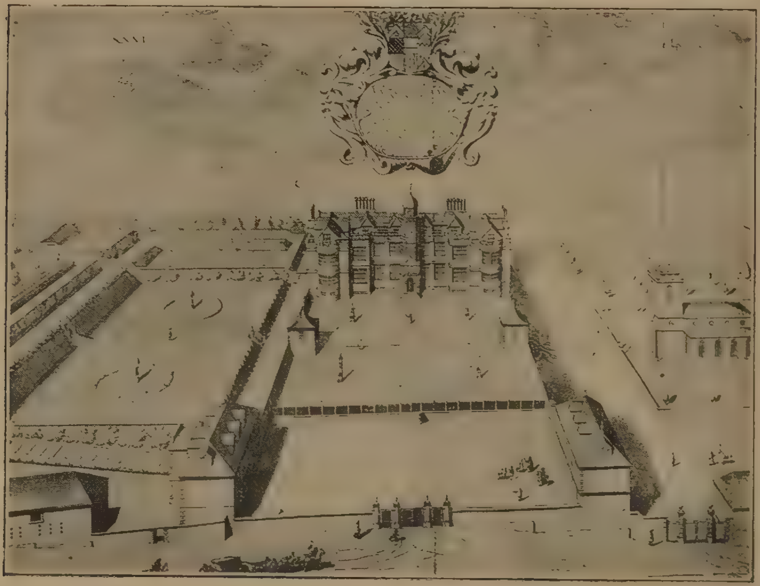
For more than two centuries the adjacent manor of Ingestre, or Gestreon, had been the seat of the Chetwynds, in succession to the very ancient family the Muttons, whose heiress Isabella had (*temp. Edward I.*) married Sir Philip Chetwynd, of Chetwynd, near the Staffordshire boundary of Salop.

Various manors lying between Lichfield and the Trent, belonging to a branch of the Stanley family, were at that period held by Sir Humphrey Stanley, whose grandfather had acquired the estates, together with Elford and Haselour, by marriage with Maud Arderne, the heiress of Sir John Arderne, whose wife was the heiress of the Staffords of Pipe. These Stanleys were of the very ancient family originating at Stanley, near Leek. By the marriage of its chief representative, Lord Stanley, with the mother of Henry VII., and by his active services on behalf of his Royal step-son—for which he was created Earl of Derby—as well as by the participation of his relatives in the shower of honours and emoluments bestowed by Henry Richmond after his accession to the throne, the Stanleys had risen to considerable power in the State.

TIXALL HALL, 1686. (*From Plot's Staffordshire.*)

Between the Chetwynds of Ingestre and the Stanleys of Pipe, Elford, and Haselour a family feud of great bitterness is said to have existed. Both were of the Red Rose faction, and both were favoured and advanced at Court.

Sir William Chetwynd succeeded to Ingestre when a child upon the death of his grandfather, Sir Philip Chetwynd, whose wife was Elena, widow of Edmund Lord Ferrers, of Chartley, and heiress of the Lords of Birmingham.



INGESTRE HALL. (*From Plot's Staffordshire.*)

Whilst Sir Humphrey Stanley was a soldier, and formed one of the King's body-guard, Chetwynd was appointed to the more peaceful office of Gentleman Usher. The causes which operated to inflame the hatred of Stanley are not recorded; the dastardly revenge he sought is stated to be the result of jealousy of his rival's advancement. The story, as related by Sir William Dugdale, and, with few variations, adopted by all other writers, tells how Sir Humphrey Stanley, envious of Chetwynd's modest advancement, caused a counterfeit letter bearing the name of Randolph Brereton to be sent to him on the Friday night before the feast of St. John the Baptist's nativity requesting Chetwynd to meet his assumed correspondent at Stafford at five o'clock the next morning. The unsuspecting victim of Stanley's malice thereupon started on his journey attended only by his son and two servants. As he crossed Tixall Heath he was waylaid by twenty armed men, "some with bows and others with spears, all armed Bregandines and coats of male," and seven of them belonging to Sir Humphrey's own family. These had hidden in a sheep-cote and a dry, deep pit, and as Chetwynd's little company approached, they issued from their hiding place and furiously attacked and killed him. In order to gratify his revenge and gloat upon the corpse of the man whom he had hated, Sir Humphrey contrived to pass that way with a company of attendants, on the pretence of hunting deer.

The widow made great efforts to obtain redress, but does not appear to have been successful; these hot-blooded encounters were too frequent at that period to excite serious attention. The heir of the Chetwynds continued at Ingestre, which became a seat of the Earls Talbot, who eventually succeeded to the Earldom of Shrewsbury.

Of Sir Humphrey Stanley, Nightingale says:—*

"In the wall of the south aisle of Lichfield Cathedral lies a mutilated statue of Captain Stanley, supported by a handsome Gothic altar tomb. The lower parts of the figure are entirely gone, and the little that remains can scarcely be distinguished. This person was probably Sir Humphrey Stanley of Pipe, who died in the reign of Henry the Seventh, and was excommunicated in consequence of a squabble he had with the Chapter about conveying the water through his lands to the Close, but, having shown signs of repentance before his death, was admitted to Christian burial upon condition that his monument should bear certain marks of disgrace. This is the same gentleman who procured the assassination of Sir William Chetwynd, one of the King's Gentleman Ushers during his passage over Tixall Heath."

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* Nightingale's County of Stafford, p. 800.

VIEW FROM KINVER CHURCHYARD.

Cardinal Pole.

THE County of Stafford counts among her illustrious sons the intrepid Englishman, Reginald Pole, who neither flattered or feared burly King Hal, at a time when most of the prominent churchmen and statesmen servilely laid aside principle and manliness in order to gain the favour of the King. He was born in March, 1500, at Stourton Castle, on the right bank of the Stour. Running from Halesowen, the river has just joined the Smestall water from Trysull. Near the Castle walls the bridge Stouri pons or Stewponi crosses the river on the road to Bridgnorth, and is a prominent and picturesque feature to the rapidly increasing number of visitors to Kinver, which is about two miles distant.

Whilst the wild features of this borderland of the forest in the early days of the Tudors may even yet be realized from various commanding points in the vicinity of the Castle, the whole neighbourhood is rich in beauty and historical connection. Its surroundings are Prestwood, the chief seat of the Foleys; Enville, the famed house of the Greys, Earls of Stamford, who were allied to the Queen of Edward IV. and to Lady Jane Grey; Whittington, credited with the origin of the famous Lord Mayor of London; Kinver, whose beauties, with its historic camp on the Edge, are at length becoming appreciated; Swinford Regis or Kingswinford, with its quaint old gabled "mansion house of tymber," and many other places of attraction.

A. Harrison Hill, *Wordsley.*
STOURTON CASTLE.

Henry VIII. and Reginald Pole were in the same degree descended from the old line of English Kings. With the early deaths of Edward IV., George, Duke of Clarence, and Richard III., the three sons of the Yorkist Duke of the White Rose, the lengthened rule of the Plantagenets came to a close. Edward's two sons were murdered by their uncle, and their sister married the victorious Richmond, by whom the brave but cruel Richard was overthrown.

Richard died wifeless and childless, and the only son of Clarence was put to death by Richmond, thus Edward's daughter, Elizabeth (Richmond's wife) and her cousin Margaret, the daughter of Clarence, were the sole survivors of the ancient and royal race.

Margaret Plantagenet, born 14th August, 1473, married Sir Richard Pole or Poole, K.G., attached to the court of Prince Arthur. She was the mother of four sons, Henry, Geoffrey, Arthur and Reginald, and one daughter, Ursula, who married Lord Stafford.

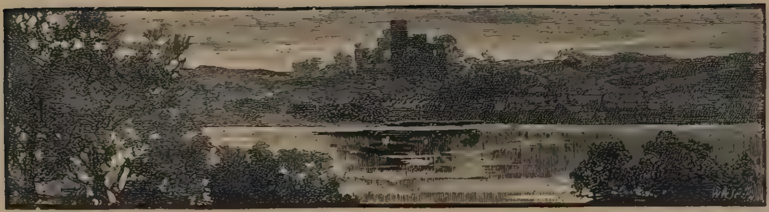
The ancient family of Hampton had been lords and owners of Stourton Castle until the reign of Henry VI., it then passed to the Whorwoods, and in the year 1500 was evidently in the occupation of the Poles, for in March of that year their fourth son Reginald, the great Cardinal, was born here.

A few years later the Poles were living at Richmond. At that period schools were maintained at most of the religious houses. Reginald was first sent to the school of the Carthusian Monastery of Sheen, and in 1512 to the Whitefriars School at Oxford; transferred to Magdalen College, he, at the age of 14, became a Bachelor of Arts. His father was now dead, and his mother, on her own application, had been created Countess of Salisbury. Subsequently Pole was Dean of Wimbourne Minster and Prebendary at Sarum, and in 1523 made Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He now went to Padua, but returning to England he soon found himself in opposition to the King, and realized that sacrifice of honour was the only mode of advancement. In 1530 he had retired to Paris, and was acknowledged one of the most learned men of the age. There is no doubt Henry tried to entice him home with the offer of the vacant Primacy of York, but he removed to Italy, and speedily, without ambiguity or fear, enlightened Henry as to his views regarding the marriage with Anne Boleyn. In vain the King endeavoured to lure him back to England, but Pole was too wary, and in revenge Henry was mean enough to sacrifice his mother's life, thus at the age of 68 Margaret Plantagenet, the last of her line, was butchered on Tower Hill.

The Countess' condemnation in 1539, without the sanction of Parliament, was the device of Lord Thomas Cromwell, but ere she was executed the precedent he had created was applied to himself.

Upon the accession of Queen Mary, Cardinal Pole returned to England and succeeded Cranmer as Archbishop of Canterbury, and it is a most remarkable tribute to the man that with the cruel acts which disgraced Mary's reign, his name is never connected, although it is perhaps impossible to free him from all responsibility.

Queen Mary and her great Minister both died the same day, the 17th November, 1558.



The Scottish Queen at Tutbury.

TUTBURY, the burh of Saxon rulers and stronghold of Norman barons, the palace of John of Gaunt and his Castilian consort, the stately castle of the House of Lancaster, and the sometime home of Kings, has through centuries participated in all the great events of English history—but no story of the past, no incident in its long existence, retains an interest to equal that of its association with Mary of Scotland during her long imprisonment. There is a sad romance about the young and beautiful queen, interwoven with the walls of Wingfield, Sheffield and Chartley, of Tutbury and Fotheringay, which will never die. The interest of the story yet grows with years, and will linger when time has destroyed her prison walls.

Born in 1542, a week before the death of her father, with whom Henry VIII. was then at war, the child Queen was early contracted with Francis, the Dauphin of France. Her chequered life began with their marriage in 1558. Her husband ascending the French throne, died within two years, and Mary in August, 1561, returned to Scotland. Her subsequent marriage with Darnley, the murder of Rizzio, the birth of her son, James I, the destruction of her husband by Bothwell, whom she immediately married, her deposition and imprisonment at Lochleven, were the events of a few years. Escaping from Lochleven, she raised an army, but was defeated, and 16th May, 1568, crossed the English border, and delivered herself into the power of her Queen cousin, her "good sister," Elizabeth. Her age was now 26, that of Elizabeth 35. After a brief detention at Carlisle and Bolton Castle, a Court of Enquiry was instituted at York. The Chief Commissioner, the Duke of Norfolk, sought to become the fourth husband of the young and attractive prisoner. His plot was revealed to Elizabeth, and he was sent to the Tower, and eventually executed. Mary was, in January, 1569, removed for safety to Tutbury Castle, under the care of the Earl of Shrewsbury.*

A quantity of household stuff, chairs, cushions, carpets, and tapestry, had been sent from the Tower of London for her use. In April, however, she was removed to the Earl's house at Wingfield, where the Earl was taken ill, through the intemperate conduct of his Countess, to whom he had but recently become fourth husband. This woman was the celebrated Bess Hardwick, the widow of Sir William Cavendish; she had an iron will and a relentless heart. It was Mary's great misfortune to be placed under her power, and greater, that her dislike of Mary accorded with Elizabeth's fancy.

Owing to a conspiracy among the Catholic noblemen in the north, Mary was hurried back to Tutbury. A march to that place to liberate her was threatened, and Elizabeth sent an imperative order "from our Castle at Windsor," 22nd November, 1569, "to convey the Scottische Queene from Tutbury, where she now remaineth, unto our Town of Coventry."

During Mary's long imprisonment, one of her chief troubles was the sudden and frequent changes in the places of detention, changes deemed necessary from rumours of conspiracies; thus she was hurried to Coventry, thence to Ashby Castle, and back, before Christmas, to Tutbury. Here she remained until September, 1570,† and taken thence to Chatsworth, and removed, before Christmas, to Sheffield Castle.

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* Whilst Mary was at Carlisle 19th June, 1568, the French Ambassador wrote from London:—"They were preparing her quarters at a Castle named Tutbury, a very beautiful place, as they say, especially for hunting." The Earl of Shrewsbury was appointed her guard, 15th December. The journey to Tutbury occupied nine days, in the depth of winter, and the Queen was taken ill on the way. On the 15th December, the Earl wrote—"Now it is sarten that the Scotes Queen comes to Tutbury to my charge." On the 12th January, 1569, a servant of the Earl wrote to the Countess—"The Scottische Quene is on her journey to Tutbury, something against her will, and shall be under my Lord's custody there."

† A letter of Earl Shrewsbury's, when the Queen was at Tutbury, says—"The charges daily that I do nowe susteyn, and have done all the year past, well knowen by reason of the Quene of Scots, are so great, etc. . . . Truly two tonnes (of wine) in a monthe have not hitherunto sufficed ordinarily, besides that is occupied at times for her bathings and such like uses."

In the autumn of 1572 Mary was taken to Chatsworth, and was also, it is said, again at Coventry at the Bull Inn. For some years a visit to Chatsworth alone relieved the monotony of her life, but in 1576, she was indulged with an agreeable change to the "Bathes of Buckstones." A severe sufferer from rheumatism, at Buxton she found relief, and has left appreciative records of this and several subsequent visits. In 1580 and 1581 she was again at Chatsworth, and although but 38 her hair had become quite grey. In 1584, September, she quitted Sheffield Castle for Wingfield.

Sir Ralph Sadler had succeeded the Earl as keeper to the royal captive; but he was heartily sick of the task, and perpetually pleading to be relieved of his trust. Another change of place of detention was decided upon, either to Tutbury or Nottingham, but Tutbury could be most cheaply furnished by removing the effects of Lord Paget, of Beaudesert, then subject to a forfeiture for treason, accordingly the household effects—hangyngs, beddyn, lynenes, playt, brasse, pewther, and other furniture—were removed to the Castle. On Wednesday, the 13th January, 1585, Sir Ralph set out with his charge by way of Derby, where they stayed the night, order having been first sent to the Bailiff of the town to provide "that there be none assemble of gasing people in the streets," and on the following day, accompanied by Sir John Zouche, Sir John Byrm, Sir Thomas Cockain, Mr. Manners, and Mr. Curzon, they reached Tutbury.*

Constant care was taken to guard against surprise or treachery at Tutbury. Amongst other precautions, "thirty handsum lusty men were retained, having good friends in this part of Staffordshire, being most of them Her Majesty's furmoeurs or furmoeurs sons depending upon this

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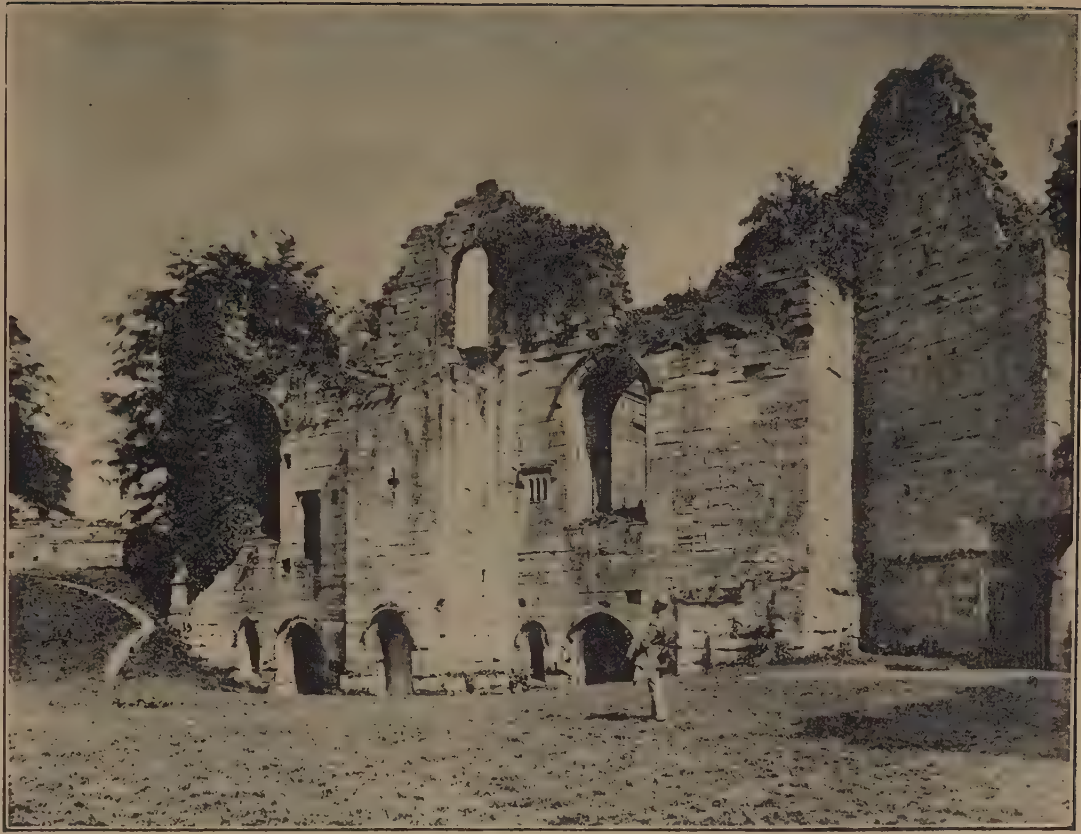
* The stoppage at Derby gave great offence to Elizabeth, and Sir Ralph Sadler explained that no nearer road was passable, though he had sent a rider forward to see if any way passable for coach, by reason of hills, rocks, and woods. Some busybody at Court, called "a great personage," had reported that the Queen was offered to salute and to kysse a multitude of the townes weomen. Sir Ralph's refutation, alike creditable to him and to his royal charge, was—"That her enterteynment to those women was this. In the little hall was the good wife, being an ancient wydow named Mres Beaumont with iiii other women her neighbours, so sone as she knew who was her hostesse, after she had made a beck (a nod) to the rest of the women standing next to the doore, she went to her and kissed her and none other, saying that she was come thither to trouble her, and that she was also a wydow, and therefore trusted that they shoulde agree well enough together, having no husbands to trouble them." Further, Sir Ralph stated that "by his appointment the Bailiffs caused a good watch of honest householders to be around at all the corners of the towne and in the market place, and viii to walk all night yn that streete where she lodged, as myself lying over against that lodging can well testify by the noise they made all night."

</br>

R. Keen, *Burton-on-Trent.*

TUTBURY CASTLE.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

honour or duchy." Thus great hardship was suffered by the inhabitants of villages around Tutbury in guarding and provisioning the Castle, and earnest appeals for relief were made. The Queen's guard at some periods amounted to 200 officers and men, and her personal retainers and attendants to 42 persons.*

Sir Ralph Sadler's task was extremely distasteful to him, on the 22nd March, 1585, he defended himself against a complaint that he had given the Queen "liberty to go abrode a hauking vi. or vii. myles from the Castle." In reply, he stated "the trewth in dede is that when I came hither fynding the country comodious and mete for the sporte which I have alwayes delighted in, I sent home for my hauks and falconers wherewith to pass this miserable lyf which I lead here, and when they cam I take the comodity of them somtymes here abrode not farre from this Castel." He further acknowledged that at the Queen's earnest entreaty he assented to her desire to see his hawks fly, "a pastime indeed she takes singular delight in," and that she had "been with him upon the ryvers here 3 or 4 times, somtymes 1 myle, somtimes 2 myles, but not more than 3 myles from the Castel."

Within a month Sir Ralph was superseded in the trust by Sir Amyas Poulet, and Mary's illness increased to an alarming extent. She has left a dismal account of her misery at Tutbury. "I am," she says, "in a walled enclosure on the top of a hill, exposed to all the winds and inclemencies of heaven," and describes her miserable accommodation; a patch, called a garden, she describes as only fit for pigs. Sir Amyas, more over, removed the cloths of state from her great chamber, and eventually, January, 1586, conveyed her to Chartley.†

In November, previously, Poulet was at Chartley preparing for Queen Mary's removal there, but on the 6th of that month, in consequence of the sturdy resistance of the young Earl of Essex to his house being so used, he received instructions to inspect Dudley Castle as to its fitness to receive the royal prisoner, instead of Chartley. The report of Sir Amyas to Walsingham, as given by Twamley from the State Papers,* has a special interest :—

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* In the correspondence of Sir Ralph Sadler, he speaks of "Burton, three myles off," as the place for supplying beer, and it is said that during the Babington Conspiracy, a Burton brewer, who supplied the Castle with beer, became the medium of communication with Queen Mary.

† Some years later her son, James I., visited his mother's prison of Tutbury, not from sorrow and sympathy, but to hold revel and feasting therein.

"Sir,—I would not faile, according to your former directions, to use all diligence for the removing of this Q. to Chartley, and to that purpose have caused greate store of woodd to be felled, sea coale and charke coale to be burned, tymber to be sawed, bere to be brewed, brick to be carried, and manie other like necessaries to be provided; but your letters of the iiiith of this present coming to my hands the vith of the same at ten of the clock at night, I retired my servants from Chartley, I discharged my carpenters and masons for one week, I disapointed as manie carriages as I could upon so short warninge, and stayed all my other proceedings there untill my returne from Dudley castle, where finding my L. Dudley absent I was forced to take my lodging in one of the poorest townes that I have sene in my life; and the next day tooke a full view of the castle, with the assent of sayde L. who being then at Warwick, sent the keys with all expedition. The lodgings of this castle are not so manye in number as I would wishe, and are also verie little and straight, saving the lodgings which must serve for this Q. wch are so faire and commodious as she cannot desire to haue them amended. Touchinge the rest of the howse, these defects and inconveniences following cannot be denied: There is great plenty of sea-coale, charke-coale, and fire woodd at hand, which cannot be had but for readie money, and therefore will prove chargeable when it shall be compared with the charge in other place, where fire woodd and coale came owt of the Queenes owne woodd, and cost nothing but the makinge. The brewing vessels are somewhat decayed; and some are wanting, which may be supplied from Burton. The water for the kitchens and household must be fett out of the dikes without the gate, and yet some will say that the pump wch standith in the myddest of the court yf yt were clensed would furnishe sufficient and good water, but I find others that doubt thereof. The chamber windowes of this Q. lodgings are open upon the park, as likewise the windowes of her kitchen, which I trust may be supplied by a good watch and a deep ditche, but specialie by this Q. infirmitie which will not permit her to run away on her feet. These defects are recompensed yn parte with the strength of the howse in other respects, and with manie other good commodities. The counties of Worcester and Warwick adjoining yelding good plentie of all kinds of victuals, and at reasonable prices, saving that corne groweth to be deere in all these parts. Thus, I have delivered unto you my simple opinion herein without partiality, referring the same to your better consideration, and so do forbeare to trouble you with anything ells until I shall hear from you what shall be resolved herein. The provisions made at Chartley, of woodd, coals, bere, &c., will be put away with help of Mr. Bagott with no great losse. I am now glad that I stayed my proceedings at Chartley, wherein I thought good to make choyse of the lesse damage, because if I proceeded in my work and carriage, and that the remove had bene disapointed, I had increased her majestyes charge greatele, and altered my L. of Essex howse, Chartley, in something which perchance would not have been pleasing to his L. These are the fruites of irresolution, charge to her majestie, trouble to the countrie ine carriage, and the losse of my labour in vague journeys.

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* Twamley's Hist. Dudley Castle, p. 89.

I have according to your directions carried this journey, and the dependence thereof in such sort, as neither my household at Tutbury dothe know where I am, nor my L. of Essex servants at Chartley do think that any thing ys lesse intended than the disapoynting of the Scottish Quenes removal thither. . . . . . . And although the remove to Dudley castle shall be resolved, yet I would be gladd to receave this letter for Mr. Bagot to serve my turne in case of necessitie during my abode at Tutburie, because I look every day for harme. I think myself assured by the sight of a memoriall sent this last weeke from C. Serelles to Han, that the Scottishe gentlewoman came with the carrier to Tutburie the ix. of this present. And whereas I wrote unto you that I would bestowe her with Mr. Baggot or Mr. Greysley untill I knew your pleasure, I have confidence that they would think themselves yll handled to be troubled with any belonging to this Q, and therefore have taken order with my wife to bestow her with an honest merchant of Burton. Being sorie that I have not heard from you herein by your last letters, but it may not seem strange that you forgot these like trifles, in this busie and troublesome tyme. Yt maye please you to give me leave to say unto you once againe that in respect of the long cariage, and greate charge wch will ensue of this remove to Dudley castle, I will not advise the same yf yt be not intended that wee shall remayne there some long tyme, and then some greater charge than those before remembered will not be yll bestowed. Yt seemeth that your doubt of the neighboures of Chartley wch will hardly be matched at Dudley castle, or ellswhere in these parts; Sir Walter Aston dwelling within thre miles (*Tixall*), Mr. Bagot as neare (*Bagot Park*) Mr. Trentam within six miles (*Rocester*), all three lietenants of the sherr, Mr. Griesley within four miles (*Colton*), by the late death of his mother, besides some others, well effected gentlemen of good calling, and among the rest of the good neighbours, my L. of Essex tenants, may not be forgotten. And thus not having wherewith ells to trouble you at this tyme, I commit you to the mercy and favour of the highest. From Rushall, the 11 November, 1585.

Your most assured poor friend,

A. POULET.

During the stay at Chartley, the Queen was hurried from one gentleman's house to another, that her cabinets might be rifled during her absence; even her money was taken from her, that she might not bribe anyone. When she came first to Tutbury, she was described as "a goodly personage;

hath an alluring grace, a pretty Scottish speech, a searching wit, with great mildness, and her hair black," now, after 15 years of cruelty and indignity, she was completely broken down. On leaving the stately gatehouse of Tixall, then newly erected, on the 30th August, she is supplicated by poor people around her—"Alas"! says the poor grey-haired Queen of 43, "I have nothing for you, I am a beggar as well, all is taken from me." She rejoined her bodyguard in tears.

The next month, Sir Amyas Poulet, accompanied by Sir Thomas Aston, Sir Thomas Trentham, Sir Thomas Gresley, Sir Edward Aston, Sir Edward Littleton, Sir Walter Leveson, Sir John Bowes, and Sir Richard Bagot, started from Chartley with the hapless prisoner for Fotheringay. They rested at Abbots Bromley Manor House, where an inscription on the window records "*Maria Regina Scotiæ, quondam transibut istam villam 21, Sept. 1586, usque Burton.* At Burton she bade farewell to the County in which she had suffered so much, and on the 8th of February following was put to death at Fotheringay.

ABBOTS BROMLEY.

OKEOVER.

The Three Dudleys.

TWO years after Mary Stuart was put to death at Fotheringay, one of her enemies, Robert, Earl of Leicester, died on his way to Warwickshire. He was the last of the three Dudleys, by whom English statecraft was, during nearly the whole of the Tudor rule, almost continuously influenced. Each of these men had a connection with our County. Edmund, the lawyer; John, best known as the ambitious Duke of Northumberland; and Robert, generally designated the infamous Earl of Leicester. Their remarkable, and in some respects brilliant, careers—a mingling of romance with subtilty, valour with crime, and ambition with failure—are not undeserving a brief notice.

A long accredited story, first given by Erdeswick, tells us that the father of Edmund was a carpenter born in the town of Dudley, who travelling for a living, happened to be entertained at the Abbey of Lewes, in Sussex, and was called by the Monks, John of Dudley. The story tells further

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how that growing in favour of the Abbot he married, and continued as the carpenter of the house, and had a son Edmund, who, for his great aptitude in learning, was noticed by the Abbot and sent to the University, and thence—in order that he might become a lawyer and manage the lawsuits of the Monks—to the Inns of Court.

This story of the carpenter, however, like many of the time-honoured tales of our chroniclers, has eventually been disproved. Investigation has shown that Edmund Dudley was, as he claimed to be, a descendant of a younger branch of the Sutton Dudleys, of Dudley Castle.

It may be doubted if this claim was worth making. The Sutton Dudleys were a long-continued line without a distinguished name—perhaps the greatest of the family was Edmund's grandfather John (born 1401, died 1487), who at the age of five succeeded his father, and in due time was made a baron. He adhered to the house of Lancaster as long as it suited him, was much disliked by the Yorkists, was wounded at Blore Heath, and received very liberal rewards. His principles were pliant, and in the first year of Edward IV. he received rewards for services to the other side. Although honoured by the ill-fated young king Edward V. he transferred his faithful services to Richard III., in the first year of whose reign he was again rewarded.*

John, the father of Edmund, was the second son, and his appearance at Lewes was probably about the time of the Blore fight. It is noteworthy that the priory of Dudley, adjoining the Castle, was one of the very few of the Cluniac order in England, and that the priory (not abbey) of Lewes was the chief Cluniac priory in the kingdom. About 1461 this alleged carpenter married Elizabeth, daughter of John Bramshot, Esq., Lord of Bramshot, Hampshire, and of several other manors. Edmund, their son, born in Staffordshire, 1462, was the first of his family to make a lasting name in history.

When Henry VII. entered London after his triumph over Richard III., Edmund, after a successful career at Oxford and Gray's Inn, was living and practising as a lawyer in St. Swithin's Lane. Although then but 23 years old, the new king, who was six years his senior, appointed him one of his Privy Council. By an early marriage with Anne, sister of Andrews, Lord Windsor, he had an only daughter, and became a widower in 1494. About this time he obtained the wardship and disposal in marriage of Elizabeth, daughter of Edward Grey, Baron de Lisle. Descended from the renowned John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, his ward was a most desirable alliance, he, therefore, when verging on 40, married her himself.

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* The two Lord Dudleys next in succession, Edward and John, were but a mixture of weakness and wickedness. The last-named, known as the "Lord Quondum," lost the Castle, and lived on charity.

During the last few years of his life he, in conjunction with Richard Empson, another lawyer (said to be the son of a Towcester sieve maker), entered upon that series of exactions and forfeitures which became notorious in history. By their oppressions vast sums were extorted to fill the coffers of their avaricious master, but an indignant clamour was excited, during which the King died.

His successor, who never regarded loyal services to his father, rapidly squandered the hoarded wealth in pleasure, and, without a particle of legal right, on the 18th of August, 1510, executed both the hoarders upon Tower Hill.

John Dudley, the eldest son of Edmund and Elizabeth, is said to have been born in the vicinity of Okeover, near Dovedale, in the year 1502. Scarcely eight at his father's death, his wardship was given to Edward Guildford, an Esquire of the King, to whose daughter Jane, he was subsequently married.

With great personal advantages, a courtly bearing, great courage and address, he combined considerable ability and keenness, he early obtained a knighthood on the field, judiciously served Wolsey until he fell, and then attached himself to Cromwell. In 1536, the year in which Thomas Cromwell was made a Baron, Dudley was made Sheriff of Staffordshire, what was his qualification is not apparent, but it is possible he had already acquired the Castle of Dudley. With Cromwell's fall, four years later, Dudley's advancement commenced. A Knighthood of the Garter, a Peerage as Viscount L'Isle, and the office of Lord High Admiral followed in rapid succession. All things, it is recorded, he achieved with honour, and as he advanced in the King's favour so also did he in authority with the nobility.

Whilst he served with valour and ability under the Earl of Hertford (Duke of Somerset) in the wars with France and Scotland, he, notwithstanding the ever-changing policy of the King, retained the royal favour, and when the imperious tyrant died, he was virtually the ruler of the little band of courtiers who reigned in the name of the youthful Edward.

In a few years he became possessor of the Castle, and the title of Earl of Warwick, was made Earl Marshal, and finally Duke of Northumberland.

DUDLEY, FROM THE CASTLE HILL.

At what time and by what means he obtained Dudley Castle is not clear, it was before 1538, for about that time he says in a letter "after my coming home to Dudley." In 1545 he obtained a grant of the Lordship of Birmingham, whilst his acquisition of wealth, mainly the estates of the plundered Religious Houses and the Gilds was enormous. Successively Lord

Thomas Somerset and his brother the Protector, uncles of the King, fell the victims of his intrigue; but his crowning ambition, the capture of the crown itself,* was a dismal failure, and his ruin was startling in its rapidity. His ability and shrewdness, his consummate skill forsook him in adversity, he vainly begged for life. Brought to Tower Hill, 22nd August, 1553, he blamed others for his own acts, avowed himself a Catholic, and "The sayings of John, Duke of Northumberland, uppon the scaffolde," was printed and sold for the delectation of his enemies.

Thus after 30 years' incessant scheming and intrigue, whereby he had ultimately raised himself to the highest position in the land, and accumulated vast wealth, John Dudley, the most powerful of his race, lost all by one gross blunder.

Robert Dudley, the fifth son of the Duke, born 24th June, 1533, was only connected with Staffordshire during the last ten years of his life.

According to his biographer, Hayward,—"He was the true heir both of his father's hate against persons of nobility, and cunning to dissemble the same, and afterwards for lust and cruelty a monster of the Court."

When brought to the Court of Edward VI., he was but a stripling of 16, the King's age being 12 only; here he became acquainted with the princess Elizabeth, who was his own age. He was a handsome young fellow, and like the rest of the Dudleys, well educated; he had considerable daring and ability, wanting rather in courage than wit, and Elizabeth was attracted by his very goodly person.

On the 4th June, 1550, he was married at Sheen to the beautiful Amy Robsart, in the presence of the King, to whom he was shortly afterwards made Gentleman in Ordinary. Hayward pointedly remarks—"After this appointment the King enjoyed his health not long."

On Mary's accession, 1553, Robert, with the rest of the Dudleys, was incarcerated in the Tower, and there he was visited by his wife. After being pardoned he served as a soldier, subsequently he obtained the confidence of Mary, or at least of her Spanish husband, but he did not overlook the probability of Elizabeth coming to the throne, and when in 1558 this happened, he was at once promoted, made Master of the Horse and K.G., admitted to close intimacy with Elizabeth, and acquired a remarkable power at Court.

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* The marriage of the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey with Guildford Dudley, is said by a Venetian visitor to London, to have been forced upon her in spite of her vehement resistance, that she was compelled to live with the Dudleys whom she viewed with deep detestation, and that when compelled to accept the Crown her husband claimed the title of King, but this she declined to admit.

In 1560, his wife who had been moving about from place to place, was confined under trusty keepers at Cumnor, where, in September, she was murdered, or met with a most remarkable fatal accident. Dudley did not attend her funeral, he remained at Kew in a house given him by Elizabeth, his relations with the Queen became closer, and for a few years they were supposed to have been secretly married, but his insolence and presumption led to bitter quarrels. The accident to Amy made Elizabeth cautious, she even proposed he should marry the Scottish Queen, she gave him Kenilworth Castle, created him Baron Denbigh and Earl of Leicester, she loaded him with wealth and for a long time enabled him to boast of his unrivalled power at Court, yet she hesitated at becoming his second wife.

Among his baser acts, during this period, was his intrigue with the Duke of Norfolk and the Catholic party of the Scottish Queen, whereby Norfolk was lured to his downfall.

In 1573 he secretly married the lady Douglas, widow of Lord Sheffield; by her he had a son Robert, and also, it is said, a daughter born at Dudley Castle. *

Having lavishly restored Kenilworth Castle, he entertained Elizabeth there in 1575 in a princely manner; and having fallen in love with lady Lettice, the wife of Walter Devereux, Earl of Essex, of Chartley, he was anxious for the Earl's departure for Ireland. It was never proved that Leicester caused the death of Essex, but he died at Dublin on the 22nd September, 1576.

Attempts to bribe his wife to repudiate their marriage and to destroy

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* Mary, the sister of Leicester's wife, married Edward, Lord Dudley. In 1575, the Queen, after leaving Kenilworth, paid a visit to Dudley Castle, and was also entertained at Chartley by Lady Essex, who had been at the Kenilworth revels.

her by poison having failed, he married the widow of Essex secretly, and for more than a year kept Elizabeth in ignorance. At length she was enlightened by the French Ambassador whilst negotiating a marriage with Alençon. The Queen was overwhelmed, accepted Alençon, and ordered Leicester into confinement, but rapidly recovered and brought him back to Court. She, however, loathed his wife, and in 1583 denounced her with terrible vehemence, nor did she ever forgive her.

OLD TOWN HALL, DUDLEY.

In the year of his third marriage, he acquired the ancient Staffordshire seat of the Bassets at Drayton—much in the same manner as his father obtained Dudley Castle. Here he occasionally visited his wife; it was a safe distance from Court and conveniently near Chartley, now belonging to her son Robert, the second Earl Essex. Leicester introduced this stepson to Court about 1585, to counteract the influence of Raleigh who was rapidly supplanting him in the Queen's favour.

His subsequent failure in the Lowlands, both as a soldier and administrator, is well known. Upon his recall, he was in May and June, 1588, associated with Elizabeth at Tilbury in the defence against the Spanish invasion. He was afterwards taken ill and began his journey homewards, but died on his way at Cornbury on the 4th September, 1588.

By his last wife he had one son, the "noble Imp," who lies in the Beauchamp Chapel, Warwick. The son Robert, by Lady Sheffield, was ruined by his efforts to prove his legitimacy, his father, who left him the estates, having described him as "his base-born son;" he inherited many of his father's bad qualities.

Leicester left Drayton Basset to his widow, who married Sir Christopher Blunt. Tradition says she and Blunt were attached whilst Leicester was alive, and that she was aware of her husband's intention to kill him, and, therefore, accelerated Leicester's death by poison. She survived at Drayton until 1634, living to see her grand children's grand-children.

The Three Devereuxs.

WHILST distinction is accorded to the three Dudleys for their evil lives, a remarkable and pleasing contrast is afforded in the honourable character and distinguished career of the Devereuxs of Chartley.

From the succession of Sir Walter Devereux to the ancient barony of Ferrers of Chartley, in 1460, to the abeyance of the title in 1646, there is a general absence in the family of that intrigue and strategy for self-advancement, the unworthy scheming and plotting for wealth and titles, too commonly associated with the nobility of the Tudor period.

In 1550, Walter Devereux, a man of proved valour, grandson of Sir Walter before named, was created Viscount Hereford, a title still held by his descendants through the Devereuxs of Chartley, of Castle Bromwich and of Sheldon, near Birmingham. Dying a few weeks only before Elizabeth ascended the throne, he was followed by his grandson Walter Devereux, who in his brief but honourable and unsullied life, made his name famous in history.

Born in 1539, and created Earl of Essex in 1572, Devereux was one of the few Peers who, throughout the conspiracies of the Scottish Queen's party and the intrigues of the Court, remained true to Elizabeth, brave and enthusiastic, he has been called the reviver of Mediæval chivalry, and from his high repute, "the good Earl of Essex."

Great were the difficulties of the Earl's position. From Elizabeth, who with few exceptions reserved her favours for the least worthy of her courtiers, he received no support, and his scheme for the recovery of Ireland was in consequence of her parsimony, only to be effected at his own charges and from moneys raised on his Estates, whilst in the prosecution of his mission, he was hampered by the vacillation of the Queen and the reproaches of Leicester.

During the absence of Essex, his wife Lettice, the daughter of Sir Francis Knollys and cousin of the Queen, remained at Court. She was present at Kenilworth during the revels of 1575, and the subsequent progress through Staffordshire;* thus, whilst Essex was contending with difficulties and hardships in Ireland, his Countess was royally entertaining Elizabeth and her Court at Chartley, and, it is said, carrying on an intrigue with Leicester.

In the autumn Essex returned home to gather together what remained of his property, at this time he treated Leicester as his enemy.

But Ireland was going from bad to worse, and the return of Essex became necessary, Leicester was anxious to hasten it. In September, 1576, he landed in Dublin, three weeks afterwards he was dead. Leicester is credited with his murder as consistent with his character and antecedents. On his deathbed he wrote an earnest appeal to the Queen for her goodwill to his young son, and to Burleigh to become the lad's guardian, and marry him to his daughter, and for his military education to be directed by the Earl of Sussex.†

The widowed Countess secretly became Leicester's third wife. She retired from Court never to return, and settled at Drayton. Leicester's second wife was still alive, both marriages were as yet unknown to Elizabeth.

Drayton, the ancient estate of the Bassets was inherited by the Staffords, and upon the attainder of the Duke of Buckingham in 1521, came to the Crown. Held under lease by the family of one Robinson a London mercer, it passed eventually to a London scrivener, but the Robinsons re-entered by force, when the Sheriff with 7,000 people, beseiged the place and beat down a part of the property with cannon.

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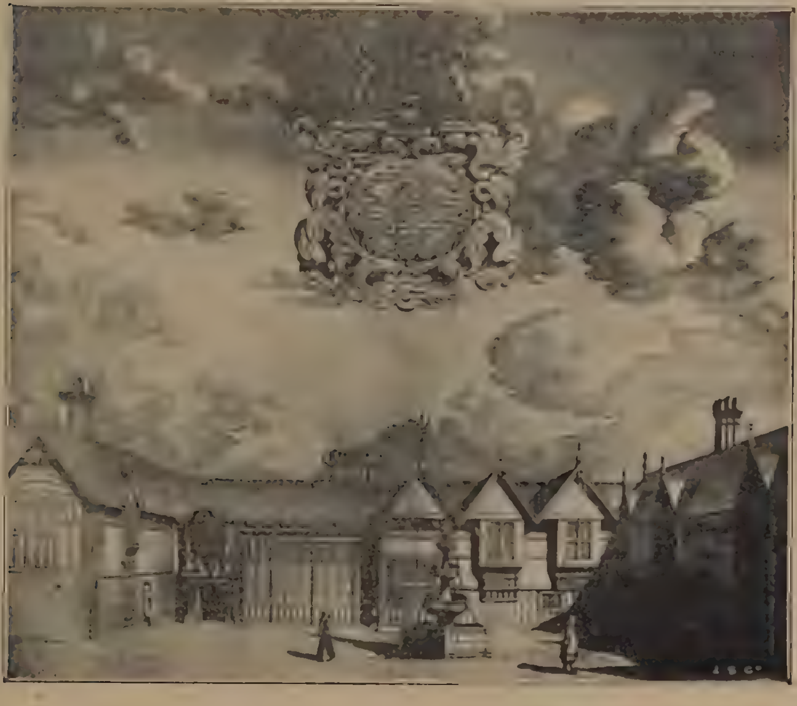
* Elizabeth proceeded from Kenilworth to Chartley, thence to Chillington, near Wolverhampton, and Stafford, and subsequently to Dudley Castle.

† Earl Sussex was Leicester's greatest opponent at Court, on his deathbed (June 1583,) addressing his friends he said—"I must leave you to your fortunes, and the Queen's grace and goodness; but beware of the gipsy (Leicester), for he will be to hard for you all; you know the beast as well as I do."

At a convenient distance from Chartley, and a safe distance from Court, Drayton was acquired by Leicester as a suitable home for his wife, the erstwhile Lady of Chartley, and here she was visited by her new Lord when he found it convenient.



CHARTLEY CASTLE. *(From Plot's Staffordshire.)*

The second Earl of Essex, Walter's eldest son Robert, fills too large a space in history for his career to be adequately dealt with in this brief chapter. He was born in 1567, and spent his early years at Chartley. In January 1577, he went to Lord Burleigh's house,* and to Cambridge the same year, and matriculated in 1579. His chief friend at College was Anthony Bagot, son of Richard Bagot of Blithefield, adjoining Chartley.

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* At this period at the age of ten he was taken to Court, and when the Queen wished to kiss him, he refused the proffered honour.

For many years Essex was in an impoverished state, from the family estate having borne the costs of the Irish expedition. In the year of his matriculation, in a Latin letter to Burleigh, he complained of the scantiness of his clothing which was with difficulty supplied, whilst in 1585, his grandfather told him "his inherited lands were insufficient to maintain the poorest Earl in England."

In 1584, he appeared at Court, introduced by his step-father with the unworthy object of counteracting Sir Walter Raleigh's rapidly growing influence with the Queen, "his goodly person and innate courtesy made him popular," and Elizabeth's favour and goodwill was extended to him, to an injudicious degree.

In 1585, it was arranged to lodge the Scottish Queen at Chartley. Essex vehemently protested, and his grandfather Sir Francis supported him, saying, "It was bad policy to lodge the Queen in so young a man's house," nevertheless to Chartley she was taken.* Meanwhile Essex left for the Netherlands, and distinguished himself at the battle of Zutphen, where Sir Philip Sidney was slain.

In 1587, he was again at Court and a great favourite with the Queen. "When she is abroad," writes his friend Anthony Bagot (3rd May,) "nobody goes with her but my lord of Essex, aud at night my lord is at cards or one game or another with her, that he cometh not to his lodging till the birds sing in the morning." In July, enraged at some slight shown by Elizabeth to his sister, Essex left the Court at midnight in a furious passion and proceeded to Theobald's, Lord Burleigh's seat, and from thence to Sandwich, but the Queen speedily sent for him back, and shortly afterwards appointed him Master of the Horse.

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* On the 4th November, 1585, Essex wrote his friend Richard Bagot, who was ordered to assist in removing Queen Mary to Chartley, "That he had stayed such removal, but to prevent the worst, desired his Steward to remove all bedding, hangings, &c., to Blithefield, and if she come to Chartley, it may be carried to Lichfield." Sir Amyas Paulet thereupon visited Dudley Castle and Chillington, but reporting against both places the Queen was in January taken to Chartley, where, alternately with the neighbouring mansion of Tixall, she remained for several months.

During the period of the Armada scare, he was kept at the side of Elizabeth at Tilbury, to the fretting and chafing of his spirit, whilst others were free to face the foe in the Channel, but in 1589, he secretly left the Court to give aid to Norris and Drake in the expedition to Portugal. Elizabeth who was angry at his escape, recalled him, and his presence at Court soon charmed away her anger. This hot-blooded desire for military glory was the passion of his life, but Elizabeth liked her favourites to be passive slaves not heroes.

In 1586, at the age of 29, Sir Philip Sidney, soldier and poet, a nobleman too out-spoken for Elizabeth's Court, was, as we have seen, killed in battle. In 1590, Essex married his widow, Frances, daughter of Sir Francis Walsingham. The usual royal resentment followed; he left England, and in 1591-2 was fighting the battles of Henry of Nevarre; but the miserable jealousy, however, quickly subsided. For the next four years Essex was at home, "resolved to secure domestical greatness," and in the election

J. Gale, *Wolverhampton.*

TIXALL GATEHOUSE.

of 1593, he used his influence to secure the return of his own nominees for Stafford, Lichfield, Tamworth and Newcastle.

In 1596, Essex covered himself with glory by his bravery and humanity in the capture of Cadiz, yet his two months' absence enabled his enemies to poison the mind of the Queen with malicious insinuations.

Two years later he conducted an expedition to Ireland, accompanied by the flower of the English nobility, and passed with his army through Staffordshire, staying at his mother's house at Drayton. In the Register of Tamworth Church is a very interesting record of the event:—

1598 "Mem; That the 30 day of April, Robert, Earl of Essex, went from Drayton Basset towards Ireland, with a hoste of men to make warre against the Earl of Tyrone, an Irishman."

One of the brightest features of Devereux's life, was his warm and noble friendship for Francis Bacon, whose brilliant genius—through the personal dislike of his relatives the Burleighs—failed to ensure his advancement. The brave and generous Essex became a passionate suitor to the wayward Queen in his behalf. Bacon sought the Solicitor-Generalship, but being refused, he was complete overwhelmed and broken down, and retired to Essex's Villa at Twickenham. Essex now made him the princely gift of an Estate which Bacon afterwards sold under value for £1,800.

When the hour of Devereux's trouble came, when by his intemperate and hasty conduct he had outraged law and reason, and defied the woman who but recently had boxed him on the ear, and he was brought to trial for his life, Bacon, who had obtained the post of Queen's Counsel, after a show of reluctance brought his great powers to the work of crushing the accomplished man, whose generous acts of friendship to him were almost without parallel in history. Essex was tried on the 19th February, 1601, on the 24th he was executed outside the Tower,* leaving a son, the third Earl, and two daughters.

The son Robert, born 1592, was not restored to the Earldom until after Elizabeth's death; and at the age of fourteen he was married to Frances, daughter of Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk. This was the notorious woman whose subsequent marriage with the Court favourite, Carr, Viscount Rochester, is detailed at length in our histories and need not be repeated here. A part of his brief married life was passed at Chartley, and to Chartley he returned after his divorce. The historian Arthur Wilson, who was his Secretary or Groom of the Chamber, records that Essex lived in great magnificence at his venerable Castle in friendly communication with his neighbours, visiting his grandmother's house at Drayton, and sometimes at his brother-in-law's, William Seymour, Earl Hertford's house in Wiltshire.* One of these tours, in which he was accompanied by Lord Cromwell‡ and Wilson, is

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* A ring sent by Essex to the Queen, according to prearrangement, was, it is said, intercepted by the Countess of Nottingham. and on her death-bed she revealed the fact to Elizabeth, who never thereafter would take proper sustenance, or sleep in her bed. The Countess died at Arundel House, 25th February, 1603, and Elizabeth on the 24th of the following month.

W. E. Weale DRAYTON MANOR. *Tamworth.*

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* William Seymour's first wife was the Lady Arabella Stuart.

‡ Lord Cromwell had married a daughter of Robert Meverell of Throwley.

humorously detailed by the latter. The Earl rode hard, usually 80 or 100 miles in the day. From Drayton to Warwick, some 30 miles, was covered before dinner (about 11 o'clock); my Lord could not settle his stomach until he had enough to overlay his head. A mile beyond Warwick the waters were out; Essex and Cromwell got through, but Wilson rode a barberie—a fiery nag—and getting parted by the water, they floundered into the midst of it and came dripping out.

Thus passed seven years, when in 1620, Essex with his friend the Earl of Oxford, raised two companies of gentlemen volunteers to serve in the Palatinate. They returned home the same year, but again served as volunteers in Holland on several occasions.

From 1642 until his death in 1646, Essex was one of the Parliamentary Commanders in the Civil Wars. The Chartley and Drayton houses remained with his descendants many years, but eventually the latter passed to the Peels, and was replaced by the present mansion known as Drayton Manor.

The End of the Gunpowder Plot.

On the night of Thursday, the 7th of November, 1605, little parties of horsemen—in groups of two and three together—travel-stained and worn out with the fatigue of three weary days' ride for life, reached the friendly shelter of Stephen Littleton's house at Holbeche. The party comprised the whole of the most active and desperate men, who for more than eighteen months had steadily plotted and schemed for the overthrow of the King and Parliament, and who, with fiendish pertinacity, had brought their plot to the culminating point, when, on the very threshold of accomplishment the bubble burst, the conspiracy was unmasked, the conspirators scattered and fled.

The originator, author, and master-mind of the plot was Robert Catesby, of the ancient race of Catesbys of Lapworth. His chief adherents were—Robert Wintour or Winter, *Esquire*, of Huddington, near Worcester; his brother Thomas Winter, *Gent.*; Guy Fawkes, *Gent.*, of a Yorkshire family but serving with the Spanish army in Flanders; John Wright, a broken-down Northern *Esquire*, and his brother Christopher; Sir Everard Digby, a kinsman of the Digbys of Coleshill; Thomas Percy of the Northumberland Percys; Ambrose Rokewood, who was renting Clopton House; Stephen Littleton of Holbeche and his brother Humphrey; John and Francis Grant of Norbrook, near Snitterfield; Bates, a servant of Catesby; and a party of Jesuit Priests and discontented Catholics from far and near.

The main features of the enterprise are familiar to all. A vast body of gunpowder was gradually accumulated in the vaults beneath the Parliament

House, to be fired by Fawkes at the moment of the King and nobles being assembled above, on the 5th November, engaged in opening of the session of Parliament. A vital part of the scheme was the gathering on the 5th, at Dunchurch, of all their available forces, well mounted, ostensibly to go a hunting, but practically, to gallop in force to Combe, and seize the young princess Elizabeth as a kind of hostage for safety.

All were assembled, and whilst Catesby and the Wrights, Rokewood, Percy, Tom Winter and others, about a dozen altogether, were flying in detachments along the road from London, Sir Everard Digby, with Robert Winter, the Littletons, the Grants, Sir Robert Digby, and a host of Catholic squires and gentry, to most of whom the real nature of the gathering was yet a secret, were waiting at Dunchurch, with feverish anxiety, the express from London. When it came, all who dared, hastened to their homes, the remainder rode off through Warwick to their reputed head-quarters at Norbrook and Clopton, led by the Grants and Rokewood; but here their rest was a brief one, and on the 6th (Wednesday), pursued to the confines of Warwickshire by the Sheriff, Sir Richard Verney and his forces, they proceeded towards Huddington. Here they received absolution and such consolation as the Jesuit fathers could impart, and with the aid of the finest horses the district they had traversed afforded—which they had freely appropriated—they proceeded the following day to Holbeche, Stephen Littleton's house, at King's Swinford, some four miles beyond Stourbridge.

With the exception of Fawkes, who, lantern in hand, heroically stuck to his post and was seized on Monday midnight, the whole of the daring spirits of the plot rode into Littleton's house on the Thursday night. This was the last friendly roof to which they could look for shelter, and here it is manifest they had resolved to fight for their lives; but a dramatic ending was in store for their ill-starred enterprise.

Early on Friday morning, Littleton and Thomas Winter went abroad to "observe what companies came," meanwhile Catesby, Sir Everard Digby, Rokewood, Robert Winter, the two Wrights, John Grant, Thomas Percy, and Bates, remained in the house to get their arms and ammunition ready for the expected attack from the Sheriff. A portion of their powder had become "something dankish," and they placed above two pounds of it upon a platter before the wood fire to dry; underneath the platter was the rest of their supply, some 17 or 18lbs. in weight contained in a bag. This was the interesting position of the little force about to be besieged, when someone proceeded to mend the fire by throwing more wood upon it. A piece of lighted wood flew upon the platter, with remarkable results.

A. H. Hill. Wordsley.

BRADLEY HALL, KINGSWINFORD.

Amongst those present, Catesby, Rokewood, and Grant, were the chief sufferers, the two first were most severely injured, whilst Grant was completely disfigured, and his eyes almost burnt out. The roof was blown off, and the bag of powder under the platter carried through the aperture, and alighted entire and unburnt in the court-yard outside, "which" as a quaint description states "if it had took fire in the room would have slain them all there, so that they never should have come to their trial."

The accident has been described as miraculous—the miracle apparently was that the Sheriff was not saved further trouble. To Littleton and Winter, walking in the fields, the dire accident was reported in exaggerated terms. Catesby, Rokewood, and Grant, were said to be burnt up, and the destruction general. Littleton exhorted Tom Winter to flight, but no, he would stay and bury Catesby. Hastening back they found their comrades still alive and resolved to die there, and bravely they kept their word.

Before noon, the Sheriff, Sir Richard Welch, arrived with his force, and, by his trumpeters, commanded them in the King's name to surrender; they bade him defiance, and sent him word he must have a greater force to reduce them.

By some accounts the house is said to have been fired by the explosion whilst the parley was proceeding. It is more probable that the besiegers finished the work of destruction which the explosion had begun. The besieged grew desperate and boldly sallied out; Catesby, Percy, and Tom Winter stood shoulder to shoulder, the two former of them were mortally wounded with one shot, by one Hemming, a train soldier, who had a pension for it during his life. Catesby died on the spot, Percy not outliving him above two or three days; Thomas Winter was shot in the shoulder. All this appears to have occurred in the court-yard. The two Wrights were slain at the same time, and Sir Everard Digby,* the burnt Rokewood, the wounded Tom Winter, the blinded Grant, with Bates, were all taken prisoners and conveyed to London; whilst Littleton and Robert Winter for the moment escaped and concealed themselves in the woods; and the great Gunpowder Plot was at an end.

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* Before Digby's execution, he said with reference to his effects—"Besides the trunk of armour which was sent to Mr. Catesby's, I did carry but one other Trunk with me, which had in it cloathes of mine—as, a White Sattin Dublet, cut with purple, a Jerkin and a Hoase of De-roy Colour Sattin, laid very thick with Gold-lace, there were other garments in it of mine, with a new black Winter Gown of my Wife's, there was also in the Trunk 300*l.* in money, and this Trunk did I see safe at Mr. Littleton's House after the blowing up of the powder." There is something inexplicable in the speedy conveyance of bulky luggage so great a distance, possibly it may have been forwarded by his direction from Coughton where he had been staying.

A proclamation for apprehending Robert Winter and Stephen Littleton was issued on Friday, the 8th November. Littleton was described as "a very tall man, swarth of complexion, brown coloured hair, no beard or little, about 30 years of age." After secreting themselves in the adjacent woods, they made for the house of Christopher White, a servant of Humphrey Littleton, at Rowley Regis, where, and at the house of one Holyhead, in the same village, they were concealed until New Year's Day, when they went to the house of one Peck or Perks, in Hagley, in whose barn they lay concealed for nine days. Humphrey Littleton then removed them by night to Hagley House, confiding in the cook, John Finès;[1] who, however, betrayed them next morning and they were captured.

A. H. Hill, HOLBEACH HOUSE. *Wordsley.*

A curious relation of this betrayal is to be found in a MS. in the British Museum,* called a "True declaration of the flight and escape of Robert Winter, Esq., and Stephen Lyttelton, gent, the strange manner of their living in concealment so long time; and how they shifted to several places and in the end were descried and taken at Hagley, being in the house of Mr. Lyttelton."

"Maister Humphrey Lyttelton, commonly called there Red Humphrey, because there is another Humphrey Lyttelton beside, taking advantage of his sister-in-law's absence, handled the matter in such sort, that about eleven o'clock in the night-time he had conveyed them to Hagley-house, not making any one of his council but one John Fynes, alias Jobber the Cook.

"Meat was soon procured for the half-starved fugitives; but wanting drink they knew not well how to sted themselves, because the butler was in bed, and calling so late to him for the key might perhaps prove suspicious. Therefore the cook gave this advice, that his mother selling drink in the town he would forthwith step thither and fetch some. Honest Jack Cook is no way distrusted, but his counsel allowed to be good, and he making haste to his mother's for drink tells her in secrecy that Maister Winter and Lyttelton, the traytors that were sought for by the King's Proclamation, were by Mr. Humphey Lyttelton's means at this instant entertained in Hagley-house, and therefore prayed her in the mornynge to raise the towne to take them, least he should not unsuspected get forth again himself to do it."

Finès for his betrayal received a life annuity of 40 marks, whilst Peck and his man Holyhead were hanged for their shares in the transaction.

Of the conspirators, Sir E. Digby, Robert Winter and J. Grant suffered death shortly afterwards at the West-end of St. Paul's, and Thomas Winter, Rokewood, and Fawkes, at the Palace Yard, Westminster.

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* Ayscough's Collection. 4160. 138.

Through Staffordshire in 1634.

AT the time Charles the First and his Queen were making a royal progress through Staffordshire to the North in 1634, three Volunteer officers of Norwich started upon a seven weeks' journey on horseback through twenty-six English counties. The report of the entire excursion is preserved in a MS. in the British Museum,[*] as that of "Three Southerne Commanders, in their places and of themselves and their purses, a Captaine, a Lieutenant, and an Ancient, all Voluntary members of the noble Military Company in Norwich."

Starting on Monday the 11th August, they slept that night at Lynn, Tuesday at Spalding, thence to Deeping and Lincoln. The diary here shows that, having inspected the Castle and Cathedral early in the morning, they would not breakfast until they had completed their diary entries, "for feare our memories should beguile us of our morning's sight." This aroused the suspicion of the "Jaylor from the Castle," whom they had invited to breakfast. The Captain and Ancient were clad in green, like young foresters, and the Jailor mistook them "for Clerkes of the Greene Cloth come about the monopolies," which they record as "the deep-reaching conceit of this jealous, curious coxcomb."

From Lincoln the three jovial travellers went to Newark on Thursday, through Sherwood Forest to Doncaster on Friday, to Pomfret and York on Saturday, the week following to Ripon, Durham, and Newcastle. From

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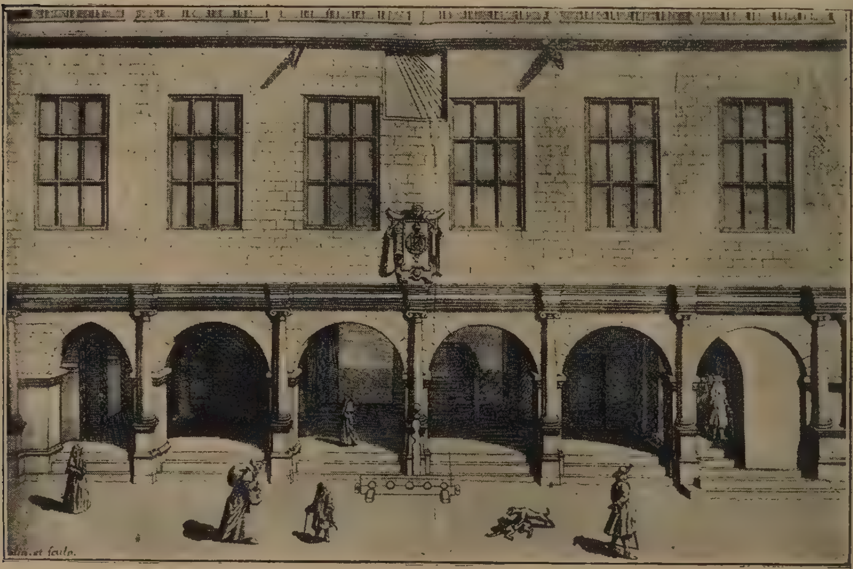
[*] Lansdowne Coll., No. 213, pp. 319-348.

Newark they travelled the same road the King and Queen had recently passed over. They now turned for Hexham and Carlisle, then through Penrith, Kendall, Lancaster, to Wigan, thence to Chester. The Diary then proceeds :—

"After having visited Nantwich, on the river Weaver, with its 'Salt-wich Pitts,' crossing a part of Shropshire, into Staffordshire, and passing Dunnington, Crew Hall, Eccleshall Castle, and other places, 'wee hasted to the Shire Towne [Stafford], where wee left neere a mile from the entrance of the Towne, on a mounted Hill, a strong and stately commaunding Castle somewhat ruinated: And by it on ye top of that hill, a fayre House, wherein liueth a good old Lady, a most bountifull Housekeeper—[Lady Stafford.]'


lin. et ſculp.

OLD SHIRE HALL, STAFFORD. (*From Plot's Staffordshire.*)

"At Stafford 'is a fayre Shire Hall, all built wth free stone, very high and stately, with 6 open Arches on either side, wth great fayre pillers in ye midst of either side, and all beneath pau'd wth free stone: it is indeed the cheife ffabricke and the grace of the whole Towne, if it were hansomely and cleanly kept. One large church receiues all the Inhabitants therein, wch is not at all adorn'd.'

"Thence, proceeding by Tixall Park, Chartley, Frodswell, and crossing the Trent at Owseley [Wolseley], w^th^ in two or three miles of Lichfeild, wee discouer'd as we rode a long, a most stately gorgeous House built Castle like, call'd Beaudsert (the L^d^ Paget's), the Gardens and walkes thereunto belonging there made to grace that sumptuous building, cost a very great Summe of Money.

"By this time appear'd to vs those stately high spires of Lichfeild Cathedrall, standing as the City doth in a plaine, neither Hill nor Dale, but a sweet and pleasant scite, where the rich meads, and fertile ffeildes inviron her on euery side; thither were we by that plaine way quickly brought to the Lilly white Swan, in that sweet little City, and no sooner were we lighted, but the Cathedrall knell call'd vs away to prayers: there we entred a stately neat Fabricke, the Organs and voyces were deep and sweet, their Anthems we were much delighted with, and of the voices, 2 Trebles, 2 Counter-Tennors, and 2 Bases, that equally on each side of the Quire most melodiously acted and performed their parts.

J. Garland, *Cannock.*

BEAUDESERT, PRESENT DAY.

"Many fayre and ancient Monuments that were in this stately Minster we were curteously guided to the sight of them, and these especially we obserued:—

'Bp. Langton's, who built the Lady Quire, and part of that stately Castle, belonging to this See, [Eccleshall Castle] where the last day we were so kindly entertayn'd: he also wall'd y^e^ close.

'Bp. Hayes, and Bp. Butlers; and many other of Bishops, Deans, Prebends, and Canons, in Alablaster.

'Of the Layitie 3 Monuments especially we obseru'd; the L^{d} Bassets of Drayton Basset, in his Coat of Maile, and Armour of Proofe, y^{e} wild Bore at his Head, and Feate.

'The L^{d} Pagets of Beaudsert, and his Lady.

The L^{d} Paget his Son, and his Lady; wth the Tiger at the Top, on a large and rich Monument, of 8 faire black Marble Pillers, w^{ch} Monum^{t} cost a good Summe of Money; w^{ch} and more (as they report) was got from that fayre and ancient Church.'

After noticing "'rich Coaps of Cloth of Tissue, a fayre Communion Cloth of Cloth of Gold for the High Altar,' and plate in the vestry; the Lady Chapel, 'hauing 8 stately fayre painted windows;' and the round Chapter-House,"—the writer adds—"This ancient structure of 1000 yeares standing, hath, att the entrance into it, 2 stately strong and neat curiously-built spir'd Pyramids, and vpon that ffrontispice there is about 100 fayre Statues, curiously grauen and caru'd in ffree-stone, of Kings, Patriarchs, Prophets, Fathers and Apostles, that grace it much, especially in time past, when (as they say) they were all gilt. And as the outward part of this Building is fayre, so the inward part thereof is neat and glorious, wth fayre pillers, rich windowes, and the Quire beautify'd wth 6 fayre gilt Statues, 3 on either side.'

In the Close, besides buildings belonging to the Dean, Prebends, &c., "there is a Pallace built castle-like, at the entrance whereof we mounted some dozen stayres into a spacious goodly Hall, as large as any we yet met with, all the roofe whereof is of Irish Timber, richly and curiously caru'd, and the couering of Lead, Church-like, the carving expressing sundry strange formes, and a great part thereof gilded." The City.—"Some few Knights and Gentlemen reside therein; but amongst all their Gentlewomen, one more glorious than the rest was, by one of these Trauellers, accidentally (yet happily) discouer'd to be the rarest and most pfect modell they met wth in all their Journey. She was Nature's utmost Perfection, and a composition of Grace, Beauty, and excellent Features, inferior to none, because transcending all, and meriting not onely observation, but wth it admiration: we find this modest, proper, hansome vestall, not in a nunnery, but at the ffryers, in this sweet Cittie. Heere we would willingly have fallen out wth precious Time, in depriuing vs, (as we desir'd) a full and satisfying sight of soe delicate a Creature, as it did, not a little, trouble us, that we could not affoord a visit to so fayre a Person."

Hastening next to Derby, and "passing through Burton Market thither, we lighted to view that great and vast promising Cathedrall-like Church, wherein lyes the Monument of him that built her, as naked, & bare, & plaine as she. The large Abbey, now call'd the Mannor House, adjoining to her: & a fayre Bridge there is of 20 arches, built ouer Trent.'

"Away then wee spurr'd for Darby, and as we pass'd on our way we left Tidbury Castle on o^{r} left hand, where his Ma^{tie} was pleased not long since to be, at the election of a new King. Wee gott by Noone to the Hart in Darby."

The last entry refers to Charles I., with his Queen Henrietta Maria, being present at Tutbury during the ancient festival of appointing a King of the Minstrels. A part of this carnival was the Bull Running, but, as this was held on the 15th August, and according to this diary the King had then passed Newark (a three days' journey from Tutbury), the election of the King must have been held several days previously. The King is said to have stayed a fortnight at Tutbury in 1634; the visit may have been prolonged for the election of the King of the Minstrels, but not for the Bull Running.

The diary entries relating to Lichfield and its Cathedral, so soon to be defaced by the havoc of war, are of considerable value and interest; indeed, the vivid descriptions given throughout the entire journey render it desirable that the record should be better known.

Arming for the Conflict.

CHARLES THE FIRST IN STAFFORDSHIRE.

FROM the period of Richmond's renowned march across Staffordshire, which doubled his strength, and led to his triumph on the 22nd August, 1485, until the 22nd August, 1642, when King Charles unfurled his flag at Nottingham, our inland shire had been blessed with an immunity from war's alarms, and the greater evil of actual strife.

Preparations for the inevitable conflict between the King and his Parliament had proceeded on both sides, but a fratricidal war was now declared, and after three weeks of useless negotiation, during which his nephews, Rupert and Maurice, reached him with a small cavalry force, Charles decided upon a march westward, across Staffordshire.

The royal forces, even when compared with the beggarly array with which Richmond at first marched, were insignificant. A first rendezvous was fixed at Wellington, and after a day's stay at Derby, Charles set out for Staffordshire.

In 1634, the King had spent a fortnight at his Castle at Tutbury, associated with the sad history of his grandmother, the Scottish Queen, and upon the occasion of another visit in August, 1636, in order to ensure fine weather, he had issued a proclamation to the men of Staffordshire, to forbear the burning of fern. It is, therefore, unlikely that he would pass by a stronghold, which two months later he made a royal garrison, and in which he subsequently sought shelter, without resting upon his march.

His stay there would probably be on Friday, the 16th September. The entry in the *Uttoxeter Chronicle*—

"1642, paid to them that swept Mr. Wood's Hall for King Charles the first, one shilling,"

would refer to Saturday, the 17th, and the next entry—

"Trained soldiers' pay, here and to Stafford to wait on the King, 34s. 6d.,"

points to Sunday, the 18th.

TUTBURY CASTLE, THE HIGH TOWER.

On his way to Stafford on that day, he would pass Chartley, the Castle of the Earl of Essex, who, as commander of the forces of Parliament, was now avenging the wrongs received at the hands of King James. Thus, on Monday, the 19th, Wellington was reached, as shown in Clarendon's ponderous history. In his progress through Staffordshire the King's forces were greatly augmented. At Wellington the King stood in their midst and made a speech, and the next day, the 20th, Shrewsbury was reached.

On the 12th October, with an army now numbering 8,000 men, the King set out for Banbury, through Bridgnorth, and reached Wolverhampton on Saturday, the 15th, resting on Sunday.

The important orders to Lichfield and other places, "Given at our Court at Wolverhampton, this 17th day of October, 1642," dispatched early on Monday, were probably prepared the previous day.

Very little has been recorded of these marches through Staffordshire, and that little is contradictory and misleading. A rendezvous was fixed for Tuesday morning at Sutton Coldfield, the direct road for this point, and, the route, perhaps, taken by the main army, was through Walsall. The king, however, reached Aston Hall on Monday, either through Perry Barr or by a road nearer to Birmingham.*

The King slept at Aston Hall on the Monday night, and proceeded next morning to meet and address the soldiers, on the spot since known as the King's Standing. The assembly may have consisted only of new recruits from Lichfield and elsewhere, and Rupert's portion of the army have gone forward by another route and encountered Lord Willoughby.

Leaving the encampment with these forces, the King proceeded direct to Packington, where he slept on Tuesday night, and the next day, the 19th, to Kenilworth. On the 21st he reached Southam, and on the 23rd, Sunday, the battle of Edge Hill was fought.

For a few months Staffordshire was free from hostilities; yet active preparations for the fray proceeded. Lichfield was garrisoned by Lord Chesterfield, Tutbury by Lord Loughborough, and Dudley by Colonel Leveson for the Royalists, who also held Stafford, Wolverhampton, Eccleshall, and other places. Burton-on-Trent, of strategic importance, was taken and re-taken, and continued to suffer from sudden assaults throughout the war; whilst Leek was a stronghold of the Parliamentary party. To the most remote parts of the county the war fever spread, and men ranged themselves on either side as inclination or their interest dictated; friend against friend, neighbour against neighbour. The same reckless sacrifice of life which destroyed the Plantagenets and gave Richmond a reign of 24 years, was about to be re-enacted, until the kingship of Charles, extending over a like period, should be brought to a tragical end.

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* In the British Museum is a copy, probably unique, of one of those remarkable and inaccurate "True Relations," printed at London the 20th October, 1642, which gives a very contradictory account of two small engagements near Birmingham, on the 17th and 18th, between Lord Willoughby and Prince Rupert's forces; this, probably, refers to one and the same engagement with some troops accompanying the King, yet in subsequent "True Relations," the Roundheads, on the one hand, allege that Birmingham was plundered by the King's forces in this march, and, the Cavaliers on the other hand, whilst admitting the plundering, assert that the King expressly ordered that there should be no plundering, and that he executed two officers for breach of orders—moreover, that the Birmingham men afterwards seized upon the King's carriages containing his plate and valuables which were following the forces, and conveyed them to Warwick Castle.

DAM STREET, LICHFIELD.

(*The spot where Lord Brooke fell.*)

The Siege of the Close.

A BELEAGUERED CITY'S SORROWS.

THE story of siege and counter-siege endured by the city of Lichfield during the Civil War, presents several features of romantic and pathetic interest whereby it stands out from the other incidents of the strife between Royalist and Roundhead which occurred in Staffordshire. Early in 1643, Clarendon tells us, "some gentlemen of that county, rather well affected than experienced, before they were well enough provided to go through their work, seized on the Close in Lichfield for the King." The Cathedral Close, thus garrisoned, under the command of the Earl of Chesterfield, was, at that time, strongly fortified by walls and bastions, and was rendered even more siegeworthy by a long pool or morass, traversed by two causeways, which separated it from the rest of the city.

While the Royalist force, aided by the loyal townsmen, thus entrenched themselves within the Close, and strengthened their position therein, the

Parliamentarians were no less busy in throwing up barricades and earthworks, to facilitate their attack on the sacred enclosure. On St. Chad's day, March 2nd, 1643, the first siege began, under the command of Robert Lord Brooke, who "planted his great guns against the south-east gate of the Close." * But the siege opened inauspiciouly for the besiegers. The Royalists had mounted long guns (called drakes) on the great central tower of the Cathedral, and on this morning two men were in charge of the guns, their object being to harass the besiegers by occasional well-directed shots from this coign of vantage. The figure of Lord Brooke, richly caparisoned in "plush cassock" and a brightly gleaming helmet of steel with gilt bars, was an easy target for the gunners on the tower, and as he stood near the besieging party in Dam Street, he happened to lift his beaver in order to see more clearly what execution was being done, when a shot from the tower (aimed by a man known as "Dumb Dyott"),† struck him in the eye and he fell dead.

Naturally this strange fatality was regarded as an omen of good by the Royalists, and was made much of in every way. Clarendon says "there were many discourses and observations upon his death, that it should be on St. Chad's day, by whose name . . . that church had been anciently called." Sir Walter Scott also refers to the coincidences attending the death of Lord Brooke,‡ observing that "the Royalists remarked that he was killed by a shot fired from St. Chad's Cathedral, upon St. Chad's Day, and he received his death wound in the very eye with which he had said he hoped to see the ruin of all the cathedrals in England."

But the death of Lord Brooke brought little relief to the besieged party, for the Parliamentary force, under Sir John Gell (who came hither from

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* Dugdale.

† "Undoubtedly one of that family which at that time so zealously maintained the cause of the King, and a name which stands conspicuous in the annals of the city of Lichfield from the earliest period of its incorporation to the present time."—Harwood, *History of Lichfield.*

‡ "—— When fanatic Brook
The fair Cathedral stormed and took;
But thanks to Heaven and good Saint Chad
A guerdon meet the spoiler had."—*Marmion.*

ANCIENT GATEWAY TO THE CLOSE, LICHFIELD.

(*Built by Bishop Langton in the fourteenth century.*)

Derby), continued the siege with great vigour, although somewhat harassed by a Royalist force which had come from the King's garrisons at Rushall and Tamworth to the help of their friends within the walls of Lichfield Close. On the following Sunday, March 5th, the red flag of defiance was hauled down from the steeple of the Cathedral by the Earl of Chesterfield, and favourable terms of surrender were agreed upon—the sufferings of those within the Close having been too great to hold out any longer—and the first siege was at an end.

After Prince Rupert had left Birmingham in flames on Easter Tuesday, 1643, he marched directly towards Lichfield, and finding the Close strongly garrisoned by the Parliamentary forces, under Colonel Rouswell, entered upon a second siege thereof. He erected batteries in Gaia Field, an eminence overlooking the northern part of the Close, but after ten days' attack, he was still unsuccessful in silencing the garrison within the walls. He, therefore, at the end of that time, took more resolute measures. After draining the moat, and thus getting access to the walls, he sprung two mines, one of which was successful in breaking open a way into the Close, which he stormed and took with great loss on his side, and reinstated therein a Royalist garrison, under the command of Colonel Harvey Bagot.

But with the city in the possession of the losing side in the great strife which had rent the whole country, there could be no hope of peaceful times for some time to come. The Close must have been frequently in a state of siege, and more particularly during the early part of 1646, after which, "the Governor being satisfied of the desperate situation of the King's affairs, surrendered the fortress to Adjutant General Louthian, upon honourable conditions." *

The havoc wrought by the several attacks upon the Close, was very severe. During the occupation by the Parliamentarians, great damage was done to the Cathedral. They broke down the monuments and defaced the rich sculpture, destroyed many very precious records, and battered in the rich stained glass windows. Dugdale says—"They kept courts of guard

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* Harwood. See facsimile on page 236.

in the cross aisles; broke up the pavement; every day hunted a cat with hounds throughout the church, delighting themselves in the echo from the goodly vaulted roofs; and to add to their wickedness, brought a calf into it, wrapped in linen; carried it to the font; sprinkled it with water; and gave it a name in scorn and derision of that holy sacrament of baptism."[*]

The fabric of the Cathedral had also suffered severely during the siege. On the first day of the siege, under Lord Brooke, the central spire was severely injured, and afterwards, a shot which struck away a portion of the lower walls, caused it to totter and fall with a crash through the roof of the choir, causing great havoc and destruction within the building.[†]

In the city itself, the besiegers wrought destruction on the beautiful eight-arched market cross, which had been erected by Dean Denton in the earlier part of the 16th century.

But the sacrilege was not all on one side, for Prince Rupert, after he had stormed the Close, carried away from the Cathedral the communion plate and linen, and whatever other valuables were still left therein.

During the long period of storm and stress which the city endured, it had its Solomon Eagle, in the person of George Fox, the founder of the Quakers, who traversed its streets, bareheaded and shoeless, crying out aloud at intervals, "*Woe to the bloody City of Lichfield.*" This message, he afterwards declared, was given to him during his early wanderings—as it would seem in a condition of semi-trance—as he came in sight of the triple-spired city.

After the restoration of the monarchy, John Hacket was appointed to the bishopric,* and at the beginning of the year 1662, visited Lichfield to find the Cathedral of his Diocese a pitiable wreck. But he set to work resolutely at once to restore it to its former beauty. “On the morning of his arrival,” says Harwood, “he roused his servants, and with his own coach-horses, with teams and hired labourers, he began to remove the rubbish, and laid the first hand to the pious work.” He himself gave £1,668 (the equivalent of £10,000 at the present day), and the prebendaries and canons gave half of their income to the fund for restoring the Cathedral, and Charles II. contributed for the same purpose “100 fair timber trees,” from Needwood Forest. Thus gradually, year by year, the fair church regained its ancient loveliness, and on the 24th December, 1669, it was solemnly re-consecrated by the good bishop, who has justly been styled “the third founder” of the Cathedral, as Bishop Walter Langton in the fourteenth century had been styled its “second founder.”

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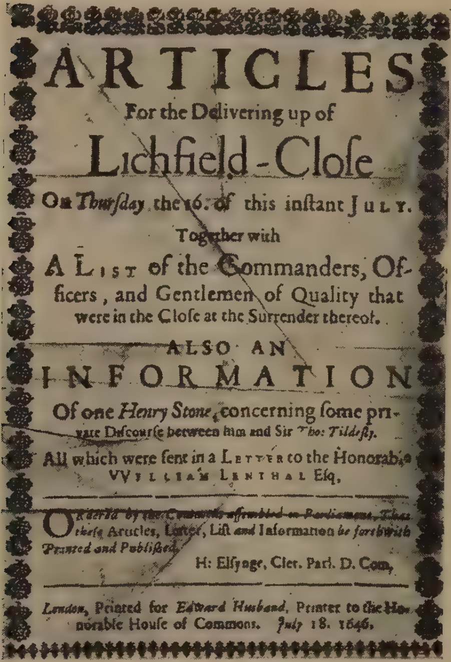
[*] "Short view of the Late Troubles in England."

[†] The following extracts from Sir William Dugdale's diary have reference to the despoiling of the Cathedral:—

"1650. September. The Gunner y^t shott downe Lichfeild steeple in y^e seige (a^o 1646) this month in shooting of a Cannon at Stafford, for triumph upon Major G'rall Harrison his coming hither, was kild by y^e breach thereof; his chin and one Arme being torne off. He lived a day or two. About the beginning of this p'sent month of October, was the stately Cathedrall at Lichfeild sett upon to be totally ruined, by Colonell Danvers Governour of Stafford; who, by authoritye from y^e Parliam^t imployed workemen to strippe off the leade from the roofe."

"1652. July 26th. This day was y^e faire Bell called Jesus Bell, at Lichfeild, knockt in peices by a Presbiterean Pewterer, who was y^e chiefe officer for demolishing of y^e Cathedrall. About y^e Bell was this inscription:—

I am y^e Bell of Jesus, and Edward is our King,
S$^{r.}$ Thomas Heywood first caused me to ringe."



ARTICLES
For the Delivering up of
Lichfield-Cloſe
On *Thurſday* the 16. of this inſtant JULY.
Together with
A LIST of the Commanders, Officers, and Gentlemen of Quality that were in the Cloſe at the Surrender thereof.
ALSO AN
INFORMATION
Of one *Henry Stone*, concerning ſome private Diſcourſe between him and Sir *Tho: Tildeſly*.
All which were ſent in a LETTER to the Honorable WILLIAM LENTHAL Eſq.

Ordered by the Commons aſſembled in Parliament, That theſe Articles, Letter, Liſt *and* Information *be forthwith Printed and Publiſhed.*
H: Elſynge, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

London, Printed for *Edward Husband*, Printer to the Honorable Houſe of Commons. *July* 18. 1646.

THE ARTICLES OF SURRENDER.
(*Facsimile of Title-page.*)

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* The last bishop before the outbreak of the Civil War was Robert Wright, who was committed to the Tower (with nine other bishops) by the House of Commons in 1641, for drawing up a protestation against their proceedings. He died in 1643, and was buried in Eccleshall Church. During the turmoil of the Civil War, and throughout the Commonwealth period, Lichfield was practically without a bishop, for although Accepted Trewen was appointed and consecrated to the see, in the Chapel of Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1644, he remained a bishop without a diocese till the Restoration, when he was made Archbishop of York.

The Battle of Hopton Heath.

ON Sunday, the 5th March, 1643, the Earl of Chesterfield ended a short and inglorious career as a soldier by the surrender of the defences of Lichfield to Sir John Gell, the rebel he affected to despise. From Lichfield to Stafford—a town with walls and gates, which centuries before might have withstood a siege—was ten miles, and to Stafford the Royalists from Lichfield mostly removed. The Earl of Northampton was on his way to relieve Lichfield; on the 15th, ten days after the surrender, he reached Coleshill. It appears to have occurred to Northampton and to Gell about the same time to proceed to Stafford—the latter to join the larger forces of Sir William Brereton, then on his march from Cheshire.

Clarendon, with his customary disdain for dates, records—

> "Yet some Gentlemen betook themselves to the Town of *Stafford* and resolved to defend that place, against which *Sir John Gell* drew his late flesh'd Troops. But the Earl of *Northampton* (who intended the relief of *Lichfield* if they had had any patience to expect it), with a strong party of Horse and Dragoons from his Garrison of Banbury, came seasonably to their succour, and put himself into the Town, and the same night beat up a Quarter of the Enemies, in which he kill'd and took above an hundred of their Horse. *Sir John Gell* retired so far as to meet with *Sir William Brereton*, who, from *Nantwich*, was coming to joyn with him in subduing of *Stafford*."

It is, of course, impossible to obtain a truthful account of the Civil War battles from the authorised versions. The *ex parte* reports of the engagement at Hopton Heath agree only in showing it to have been a most obstinately-fought battle. By one account Sir John Gell is said to have reached within four miles of Stafford when the Earl fell upon his rear and took forty prisoners and six drakes. This was apparently on Saturday the 18th; but help was near, for on that day Sir William Brereton was at Newcastle. On Sunday morning he marched to Stone, thence by Sandon to Salt Heath, where he joined forces with Gell about two o'clock, making a body computed at 3,000 foot and horse, with artillery.

THE HIGH HOUSE, STAFFORD.

This number was largely made up of recent recruits from the Moorlanders, zealous volunteers, who had suffered from the raids of the Royalist, Colonel Hastings.

The Earl was already in the field. He must have been aware of Brereton's advance, but scarcely of his increased force. His army, if numerically inferior to his adversaries, was better equipped and trained and stronger in cavalry, and he at once made a vigorous charge through the ranks of the enemy. Rallying his men, he again made a dash at another portion of the enemy's horse, and, says Clarendon, "so totally routed them that they had scarce a horse left upon the field." In the charge, and whilst near the opposing body of foot, which stood its ground, the Earl's horse was, in the first volley, shot from under him, and he found himself alone and surrounded. Disdaining quarter, he was stricken down with the butt end of a musket, his body being afterwards pillaged and stripped.*

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* Sir William Brereton, in his written report, says, "But I cannot perceive he was known before he was dead, pillaged, and stripped, when, though it was in the night, I viewed his body lying naked upon the ground. I cannot percieve there was any more care or respect either of his person when he was wounded and before he was dead, or of his body when he lay upon the field, than of the meanest soldier in either army. But notwithstanding," he proceeds, "our foot, through God's blessing, was so successful the enemy ere not discouraged making a second as desperate assault."

Notwithstanding the death of the Earl, the battle was continued until suspended by the shades of night, for the ground was found to be treacherous through pits and holes in the ground. The Royalists stood all night on the field; at daylight, says Clarendon, no enemy was to be seen. Brereton and Gell with their forces had moved away in the night with the Earl's naked body as a trophy of war. The Royalist army had suffered in the loss of too many of its officers to permit of pursuit, so all retired within the walls of Stafford.

THE HIGH HOUSE, STAFFORD.
(*Back View.*)

Whilst the report of Sir William Brereton gives but little detail of the actual fight, and is silent as to the night retreat, it is yet strong in figures and piety.

> "In the success of this battle the Lord was pleased much to show Himself to be the Lord of Hosts and God of victory, for when the day was theirs (*sic*), and the field won, He was pleased mightily to interfere for the rescue and deliverance of those who trusted in Him."

The peculiar circumstance of the Earl's death he attributes to the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence, and whilst the Royalists estimated the enemy's strength as double that of their own, Sir William, on the other hand, avers, "Some report there were 2,500 horse of theirs, whereas we had not 400 horse at most." "There were near 100 of their dragoons slain in the place where I cannot discern that we lost more than two or three." "I do not think that all our foot there present could make 500 men." "We have been informed some of their party confess they lost near three score of their most eminent commanders, but not any officer or commander who I can hear of slain upon our party." The hearsay report continuing thus for a considerable length.

Jas. Gale. OLD HALL. *Wolverhampton.*

The ancient Seat of the Levesons, Wolverhampton.

The Wolverhampton Wool Staplers.

DURING the period when Charles I. was passing and repassing through Staffordshire, one of his chief supporters and one of the most potent men of the county was Sir Richard Leveson, K.B., of Trentham and Wolverhampton, representative of one of the two great families of Leveson or Lueson, whose remarkable connection with Willenhall, Wednesbury, and the good old Market Town of Wolverhampton, had existed from a period shortly after the Conquest.

Originally cultivators of the soil at Willenhall, within the royal Chase of Cannock, two distinct branches of the Luesons were attracted by the commercial advantages of the larger town. The younger branch, descended from William, the son of Richard Leveson, of Willenhall, was in 1643 represented by Sir Thomas Leveson, the Royalist Governor of Dudley Castle, whilst the representative of the descendants of the elder brother John, distinguished as of Prestwood and Lilleshull, was the equally loyal Sir Richard Leveson, of Trentham.

The early commercial fame of Wolverhampton was based on its wool stapling trade, although in 1340 there were no merchants in the town. Yet in 1354—when the wool staple was removed from Flanders—Wolverhampton was one of few English staple towns fixed upon by Parliament. For a few years the staple was again changed to Calais, but speedily the trade came back to England, and the Levesons were among the foremost merchants of the staple; and whilst Birmingham was famous for its tanners, Wolverhampton became equally famous for its wool merchants.*

The export of English wool, which, next to Spanish, was pre-eminent in Europe for its excellence, was rigidly controlled, and at one period limited to the port of London, and when, at a later date, many English towns became recognised markets, a lasting and lucrative trade with London resulted. The enterprise of the Wolverhampton merchants is apparent. The Levesons and other local men followed the example of Richard Whittington (who came from the neighbouring town of Kinver—early noted for its woollen trade) and became citizens of London.

Thus in 1508 Stephen Genings, a merchant taylour, a native of Wolverhampton, became Lord Mayor of London, and Stowe records that "This Stephen Gennings, Maior, founded a free schoole at Wolfrunhampton in Stafford shire."

At this time Richard Leveson, the representative of the elder or Prestwood branch, married Jane, daughter of Sir Thomas Bradbury, Lord Mayor of London, and the descendants of their two sons James and Nicholas formed two houses, viz., the Levesons of Wolverhampton, and of Haling, Kent. Meanwhile the Levesons of the younger branch of the original stock were bartering wool in the market place, accumulating riches, and marrying into various County families, Walter, the head of that house, having married Elizabeth, the daughter of Walter Arden, of Park Hall, the ancestor of Shakespeare. The pedigree of these Levesons is one of unusual interest; we are, however, more immediately concerned with the children of Richard and Jane (Bradbury), viz., James, a wealthy and influential merchant of the Staple of London, Wolverhampton, and Lilleshull, and Nicholas, of London and Haling. The latter held the high office of Sheriff of London in 1534, whilst the former, who first married a Wrottesley, was a great buyer of Abbey properties, particularly at Stafford, Lilleshull, and Wenlock, the bells of which latter Abbey he purchased. He had also, in conjunction with Richard Wrottesley, Esq., obtained a lease of the Lordship or Manor and Market of Wolverhampton, granted by John Vesey, the Dean of Wolverhampton and Windsor, afterwards Bishop Vesey, whose eldest sister had married a John Leveson. This lease, which by custom was renewable for a rent of £38, constituted the holder Lord of Wolverhampton.*

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* The following list of Bailiffs of the Staple of Wolverhampton was printed in 1868 by G. T. L. :—

1483—Wm. Jennins,
1485—Wm. Leveson,
1486—Richard Gough,
1490—Giles Osborne,
1491—Walter Leveson,
1492—Robert Moseley,
1493—Edward Giffard,
1495—J. Higham,
1496—Y. Turton,
1497—Roger Pype,
1499—Wrottesley.

James died in 1553, and his son Sir Richard became manorial lord. He married Mary Fitton (daughter of Sir Edward Fitton, of Gawsworth), and died in 1561. Whilst his son (Walter) was under age, his brother (Edward Leveson) held the manor as his Executor, but, dying soon afterwards, his widow (Elizabeth)—a Moreton, of Haughton—had to defend a very remarkable Chancery suit brought about 1570 by John Leveson, Esq., Thomas Leveson, William Hoo, and other leading inhabitants of Wolverhampton, as to the appointment of the Bellman of the Market.†

This Walter Leveson, afterwards Sir Walter, was the father of the famous

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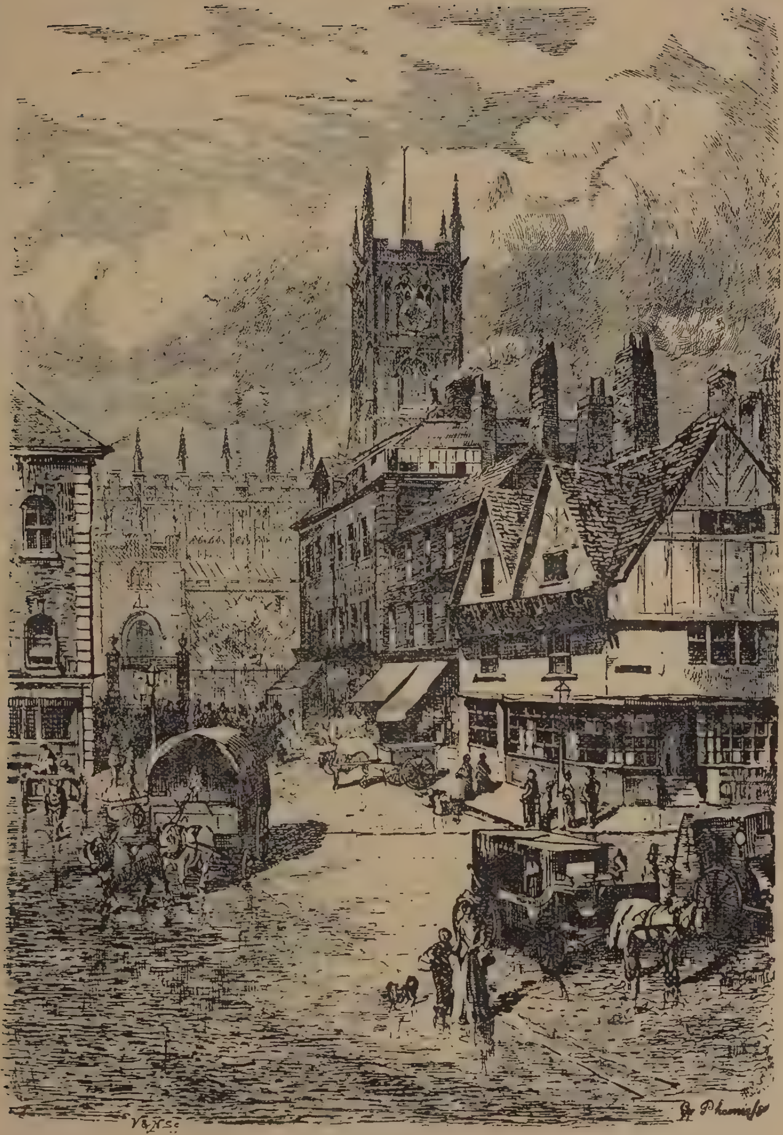
* Among the Deans of Windsor, who were the manorial lords, were (1445) John Bermingham, (1460-70) William Duddeley, (1501) Christopher Ursewyck (the favourite Chaplain of Henry VII.), and (1517) John Vesey.

† From particulars of this suit in the "Midland Antiquary," Vol. 2, p. 176, it appears that the Bellman of the Church was also gatherer of the tolls and controller of the Market, and "hath used for to ring the Market bell and to provide ladders to sett sacks of corn upon in the Market." That Edward Levison had discharged one William Wainwright and appointed George Upton to be his Officer of Tolls, Corne, and to ring the Market bell at such time as was most convenient for that his Market in Wolverhampton aforesaid to begin. The matter was remitted to John Wrottesley and Mathew Moreton, Esquires.



George Phœnix, *Wolverhampton.*

WOLVERHAMPTON CHURCH.

(*From the Market Place.*)

Sir Richard Leveson, Vice-Admiral of England, who, when only nineteen years old, served as a volunteer on board the *Ark Royal*, and fought under Drake against the Armada, and subsequently under the Lord High Admiral (Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham), whose daughter (Margaret) he married, but left no issue. He is, however, said to have left two children by his kinswoman (Mary Fitton), a lady strangely mixed up with the history of

James Gale. *Wolverhampton.*

VICE-ADMIRAL SIR RICHARD LEVESON, KT.

Memorial in Wolverhampton Church.

William Earl of Pembroke, and Shakespeare, as the dark woman of the Sonnets.

After a short but brilliant career, in which he became "Admiral of the narrow seas," and commanded a squadron sent out to the Azores to look out for Spanish treasure ships, he died in 1605, at the age of 35 (having only a year before been appointed Vice-Admiral), and was buried at Wolverhampton. A fine portrait of this brave compeer of the old sea-dogs of England (said to be by Vandyck) is in the possession of the Duke of Sutherland. His great estate passed to his kinsman, Sir Richard Leveson (descended of Nicholas the Sheriff), afterwards K B., of Trentham, who erected the brass statue to the memory of the gallant seaman, and for a long period upheld the high position attained by this remarkable family.

Having married Catherine (one of the daughters of Lady Alice Dudley—daughter of Sir Thomas Leigh, of Stoneleigh, the worthy but deserted wife of the unworthy Robert Dudley, only son of the Earl of Leicester), Sir Richard had sufficient influence with Charles I. to cause that lady to be created Duchess of Dudley.*

Sir Richard lived till 1661. Previous to his death, and probably by his help, the Duchess had recovered considerable portions of the Dudley estates She was notable for her charities, and her daughter (Sir Richard's widow), —who died in 1673, was the founder of the Almshouses at Temple Balsall and other charities in several counties—dying childless, the Leveson estates were left to Frances (the daughter of John, brother of Sir Richard). She married Sir Thomas Gower, Bart., from whom the Leveson Gowers, Dukes of Sutherland, and Earls Granville are descended.

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* The patent of creation, May 23, 1644, is a remarkable document. It acknowledges the mean fraud (piously believing his father did not know the truth) by which James I. deprived the Dudleys of wealth and dignity, restores her to rank, and promises to do more if able.

Incidents of War.

THE DIARY OF A ROYALIST COLONEL.

AFTER the battle of Hopton, in which, says quaint Tom Fuller, "The royalists may be said to have *got the day* and *lost the sun* which made it," the body of the loyal and valiant Spencer, Earl of Northampton, was taken to Uttoxeter, probably by Sir John Gell, but Brereton's forces moved the next day towards Wolverhampton, and at three o'clock in the morning took possession.

A fortnight later, April 3rd, Birmingham fell to the forces of Prince Rupert,* who proceeded to Walsall and took Rushall Hall, Mistress Leigh, in Colonel Leigh's absence, valiantly defending it with credit. Lichfield was reached on the 8th, and captured on the 21st, just as Prince Rupert was recalled by the King to Oxford, Colonel Hastings and his forces having also left Newcastle for Oxford on the 8th.

On the 14th of May Sir William Brereton took possession of Stafford as he had previously Wolverhampton, in the dead of night, and as reported by him, "almost peaceably, all being in their beds, seized a great number of prisoners, Colonel Lane was slain." On the 25th June, Tamworth Castle fell to the Parliament forces, after a two days' siege.

In July, Queen Henrietta passed through Staffordshire with the large army raised in Holland. Having taken Burton-on-Trent, she proceeded, on the 7th, by way of Croxall and Lichfield to Walsall, staying, it is said, at

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* In Shireland Lane, Smethwick, the Earl Denbigh was shot. He was removed to Cannock, where he died of his wounds. Thus in a fortnight two royalist earls were slain in Staffordshire.

Caldmore. On Saturday, the 8th, she wrote from Walsall to the King: "My dear Heart, I shall stay here to-morrow, because our soldiers are very weary. We shall start on Monday and go by the road you told me by Fred." The next day, Sunday, she again wrote: "I shall not give up my intention to advance if I can get by one of the two roads." Marching on Monday to King's Norton, she would proceed, by Tame Bridge and Sandwell, for Oldbury or Smethwick, avoiding Edgbaston and Birmingham.

TAMWORTH CASTLE AND CHURCH, IN 1780.

(From an old print.)

Meanwhile Sir William Brereton, by repairing the old fortifications, made his position in Stafford a strong one, and then sallied forth to reduce the old castle. Here, however, he met with his match. "The Oulde Ladye Stafford," he says, "had betaken herself to the castle, removed her family, and, some say, all her goods."* He alternately wheedled, threatened, and bullied. "Wee spent much time upon this treaty, but it was vain and fruitless. Wee conceive her heart was hardened." He calls the defenders "incendiaries," and says, "I doubt not the Lord will measure unto them a bloody portion of drinke." He then had the outbuildings "sett on fier to try whether these would worke their spirits to any relentinge, but all in vain."

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* She lived at a house near to the old dilapidated castle.

Instead of relenting the defenders shot some of his men and horses, "which, says the despatch writer, "did provoke the rest to a fierce revenge," or in plain English, Sir William burnt every available building near the castle to the ground, but the stronghold they could not take was afterwards found deserted, and was subsequently demolished.

In September, Brereton besieged Eccleshall Castle, a relief force under Colonel Hastings being defeated and driven away; on the other hand Chillington was taken by Colonel Leveson.

Hitherto the neighbourhood of Leek had been controlled by the Roundheads under Colonel Sir John Bowyer, Bart., of Knyperley.* In November, 1643, however, Colonel Leveson took a large force and defeated the Moorlanders, quartering for a fortnight in Leek, and then pursuing the enemy towards Derby.

That the neighbourhood of Leek had not escaped the evils of war previously is evident from the statement in the Huntbach MS., I. 55.

"William Trafford, of Swythamley, Esq., who was aged 47, 2nd April, 1663, was shot at y^e^ beginning of y^e^ Warres. Did oppose Capt^n.^ Venables, of Leek, for beating a drum for y^e^ Parliament, and y^e^ drummer's name was Sam^l.^ Endon, of Rudyard.†

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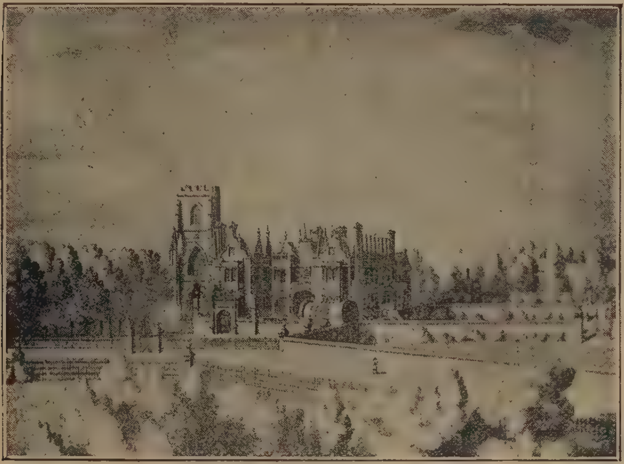
* In 1668, Dugdale, as recorded in his diary, pulled down the atchievements in Knyperley Church, hung up by Sir John Bowyer and his Lady.

† Notwithstanding the apparent disparity of ages, this Squire Trafford may be identical with the royalist Squire whose tombstone in Leek Churchyard is so well-known. It is inscribed "Wm. Trafford, of Swythamley, Esq., died December 10, 1697, aged 93," and bears a crest, "A man threshing," with the motto, "Now Thus." This has been conveniently made to have originated through this same Squire having outwitted Cromwell's soldiers at Swythamley, but "The Curious Discourses," written by eminent antiquaries and collected by the antiquary Thomas Hearne, states, "Ye aunceyntest armorial device I know or have read is that of Traffords, of Trafford, in Lankashyre, whose crest is a labouring man with a flayle in his hande threshinge and this written mott, 'Now thus,' which they say came by this occasion, that hee and other gentylmen opposing themselves agaynst some Normans who came to invade them, thys Traford dyd them much horte and kept the passage against them. But that at length the Normans having passyd the ryver came sodenly upon hym, and then hee disguysing hymselfe went into hys barne and was threshynge when they enteryd yet being knowen by some of them and demmanded why he soe abashed hymselfe, answered 'Now thus.'"

In December, a Parliamentary force was sent to Trentham, the stately mansion erected 10 years previously by Sir Richard Leveson, to prevent it being made a garrison.

Among the chief incidents of the struggle during the following year, 1644, were the capture of Patshull by Sir Wm. Brereton, February 14, and of Stourton Castle, in March, by Colonel Fox, called the Tinker, a raid upon Colonel Lane's house at Bentley to seize his cattle and sell them in Birmingham, and a retaliatory surprise attack of Lane's to plunder Birmingham which failed.



TRENTHAM (17TH CENTURY). (*From Plot's Staffordshire*).

On May 22, the fortress at Rushall was captured by a force of 2000 men under Earl Denbigh, the Parliamentary general, whose father, a Royalist, was slain near Birmingham.

In June, after a siege of three weeks, a great battle was fought outside the walls of Dudley Castle, on the 12th, the besiegers encamped at Tipton and West Bromwich, but after three hours' fighting they retired to Walsall.

Colonel Leveson, the Governor of the Castle, then endeavoured to obtain possession of Rushall by a bribe to Captain Tuthill of £2000 and the surrender of prisoners. He was, however, completely outwitted, lost his prisoners and a considerable sum of money, and his agent, Francis Pitt, of Wednesfield, one of his tenants, was hanged.

At Burton, described as "a town of Clothyers and Maultsters," a barrel of powder exploded in the Church. At the request of the townsmen the Earl of Essex reluctantly placed a garrison in the town.

No serious engagement took place in Staffordshire after 1644. During the year 1645, however, the king was frequently marching with his army through the County. Leaving Oxford with his army about May 1st, he proceeded through Woodstock, Evesham and Droitwich, took Hawkesley House on the 11th, and was at Himley on the 15th *en route* for Chester.

Among his officers was a Captain Symmonds, who, whilst upon his marches, industriously copied monumental inscriptions, made heraldic notes, and kept a journal or diary of events. From this valuable record, the following notes, commencing May 15, 1645, are extracted:—

> This night the King lay at Himley Hall, in the County of Stafford, where now the Lord Ward lives who married the Lady Dudley. An old house, moated.
>
> *Friday, May 16, 1645.* The rendezvous was near the King's quarters. Began about four of the clock in the morning here. One soldier was hanged for mutiny.
>
> The prince's head quarter was at Wolverhampton. A handsome towne, one fair church in it.
>
> The King lay at Bisbury. A private sweet village, where Squire Grosvenor (as they call him) lives, which name hath continued here 120 years. Before him lived Bisbury of Bisbury.*
>
> *Saturday, May 17, 1645.* His Majestie marched from hence by Tong, in the County of Salop. Garrisons in Staffordshire: R.—[Rebels.] Eggleshall Castle, 1644, six myles from Newport in Salop. K—[King's.] Lichfield. Col. Bagot, Governor. R.—Stafford, Lewis Chadwick, Governor. R.—Russell (Rushall) Hall, A. Taylor, Governor. R.—Mr. Gifford's house at Chillington, three miles from Wolverhampton, now slighted by themselves. K.—Dudley Castle, Colonel Levison, whose estate and habitation is at Wolverhampton, is Governor. R.—Tamworth Castle, four myle from Lychfield. R.—Alveton or Alton Castle, in the parish of Alton, about 40 or 50 men in it. In the moorelands. R.—Peynsley house near Cheddle, in Lee parish. Mr. Draycott ownes it, about 50 men in it. R.—Caverswall house. Mr. Cradock ownes it, about 50 men in it. Capt. Ashenhurst is Governor, whose father was a Justice of the Peace in Derbyshire.

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* *Plot's Staffordshire* (p. 181) says: "At Byshbury Hall is still preserved a chair called the King's chair, in which Charles the Second sat during his concealment in this mansion." Charles the Second, however, was not concealed at Bushbury, although Colonel Wilmot lay at the house of John Huntbach in the neighbourhood.

Whilst in Staffordshire, says Lord Clarendon, the King, who was proceeding to Chester, was informed by Lord Biron that the city was relieved of danger, whereupon the King decided to march upon Leicester.

Thursday, May 22. We marched from Drayton to Stone. His Majesty lay at Mr. *Crompton's* house, a sweet place in a fine parke. He is a rebel.

Friday. The army rested.

Satterday 24. We marched to Uttoxater. His Majesty lay at Sir *Thomas Milward's* house at *Eaton*, in the County of Derby.*

We marched this day through a parke belonging to the Lord Cromwell,† then by a house of Sir Harvey Bagotts in the Morelands, in Staffordshire,‡ a woody, enclosed country all the way, except the Moors on top of the hills. A black earth where they digg and cut a heathy turfe. A rebellious place. Earl of Lichfield, &c., quartered this night at Marston (near Tubury.)

This day a foot soldier was tyed (with his shoulders and breast naked) to a tree, and every carter of the trayne and carriages was to have a lash—for ravishing two women.

Whit-Sunday, May 25, 1645. The army marched to Burton-upon-Trent, the head quarter. His Majesty lay at Tutbury Castle.

We lay at Roulston (Rolleston), a royal house. *Monday, 26th.* The army rested. *Tuesday,* His Majesty marched to Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

After a furious attack Leicester was stormed and taken on Saturday, the 31st May. The Royal army then marched through Harborough to Daventry, but returning to Leicester was overtaken by the enemy near Harborough, when the memorable battle of Naseby was fought and, through the blundering of Prince Rupert, was lost; and notwithstanding the courage of the King, was converted into a race for life, pursued by Cromwell until within sight of Leicester (16 miles). The King's flight was a sensational one, the battle was fought early on Saturday morning. From Leicester to Ashby is another 16 miles, yet the King left Ashby for Lichfield at 10 o'clock on Sunday morning.

Sunday, June 15, 1645. His Majesty, about ten of the clock in the morning, left Ashby-de-la-Zouch and went to Lichfield that night. He lay in the Close that night. The horse were quartered in villages round about, some in the city. Here the King left Col. Bagott's reigment of horse. The stout Governor left here wounded in the right arme.

Monday. His Majesty marched to Wolverhampton.

Tuesday. To Bewdley.

Wednesday. We rested.

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* Paid for peas and oats for the two princes' quarters, May 24, 1645, when the King went through this town 5*l.* 12*s.* Also to Prince Rupert's cook 5*s.*, and for a hogshead of beer that went to Eaton for his Majesty 1*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*—*Uttoxeter Chronology.*

† Frodswell. ‡ Bramshall.

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After a forced march of 80 miles and a day's rest, the King proceeded to Hereford, thence to Abergavenny, Raglan, Chepstow, Cardiff, Brecknock and Ludlow, reaching Bridgnorth on the 8th August.

August 10, Sunday, to Lichfield, 24 myle. *Monday*, rested. *Tuesday*, to Tudbury. *Wednesday, August 13*, to Ashborne.

As the King left Tutbury Castle he was attacked by a force of the enemy 500 strong, with an equal loss to both sides. This was his last visit to the Castle, so closely associated with the history of the Stuart family, and visited by him on so many occasions. Eight months later, April 20, 1646, the Castle fell to Sir William Brereton, and was afterwards reduced to ruin.

The King proceeded from Ashborne to Welbeck and Doncaster, and again to Oxford, thence to Hereford, Chester, Denbigh, and back to Bridgnorth, and again for the last time made another rapid march to Lichfield on his way to Newark.

SWYTHAMLEY PARK.

A Royal Fugitive.

ON the 30th January, 1649, Charles Stuart, King of England, expiated the many sins of his father, and some lesser ones of his own, on the scaffold. The violent death which he was called upon to suffer prepared the way for the inevitable reaction, and ensured an easy and indolent reign for his easy and indolent son; but, before that reaction was near, the son was destined to pass through wearying and chastening troubles, such as had developed in his father the highest characteristics of which his nature was capable.

Born in 1630, Charles the Second was a soldier and an exile at the age of fifteen. Four days after his father's execution he was proclaimed king at Edinburgh, before he had reached the age of nineteen. Eighteen months later he returned to Scotland, and in the following year started south to reclaim his kingdom.

On Wednesday, the 3rd September, 1651, he fought and lost the battle of Worcester, and the record of the miraculous escapes and romantic adventures of the six weeks following the battle has deservedly become the most popular and romantic historical episode in our language, a story which greatly aided its hero in regaining and retaining the crown he was unfitted to wear, and which he helped in no small degree to divorce from the line of the Stuarts. The battle was valiantly fought, but against great odds, and by six o'clock the royal cause was lost, and the King and his officers* were flying for Scotland. After a gallop of seventeen miles, under the guidance of a trooper, Richard Walker, the party entered Staffordshire at Kinver Heath. Here the trooper was at fault. Earl Derby had formerly hidden at Boscobel and Whiteladies, adjoining the estates of the Giffards of Chillington, twenty miles away; and Charles Giffard being present with his servant Yates, the latter became guide. The direct route was by way of Stourton, but the Stourbridge road is said to have been taken. A crust of bread and a drink was obtained for the King, and before daybreak Whiteladies was reached.

The ruins of the Cistercian Nunnery of Whiteladies, with its mill adjacent, lay on the Shropshire border of the King's Staffordshire park of Brewood. Within the wood was another nunnery of the Benedictines, or Black-ladies, and midway, on the county boundary, was Boscobel House, occupied by the Penderels, a family of yeomen and millers, with their widowed mother, being tenants of the Giffards of Chillington.

Leaving the King at Whiteladies, the rest of the company continued their flight, and many were afterwards captured, among others Earl Derby, whose head was struck off on the 15th October, at Bolton.

Various accounts of the King's stay at Boscobel exist, and with the exception of a misleading one by the verbose Clarendon, they are mainly in accord. Richard, the miller, was abroad early. From Earl Derby and Charles Giffard he received his youthful charge, conducted him by a back door to Boscobel, and rapidly transformed him into a countryman by cutting his hair, staining his face, and exchanging his military garb for some old garments. By sunrise he had taken him to the most obscure part of the wood, called Rinshaw, or Spring Coppice. Rain coming on, a blanket was brought from the house of Francis Yates, whose wife (Penderel's sister) also brought him food. Here, where centuries before, the Plantagenet Kings had delighted in the chase, the homeless fugitive sought shelter at the foot of one of the royal oaks. Richard Penderel, prepared to take any trouble or risk, started at nightfall with the King to cross the Severn at Madeley, eleven miles distant. Whatever their future plans may have been, the attempt failed, and after dark the pair trudged back to Boscobel. During their absence another fugitive, Colonel Carles, had arrived, and Penderel rode by and proceeded to the house, leaving the King in the wood. Finding all safe, however, he brought Charles in to join in the simple evening meal of the family. William Penderel's wife prepared him a possett of thin milk and small beer, and afterwards bathed his feet, wet and worn with travel, and dried his boots with hot embers.

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* George Villiers, the profligate Duke of Buckingham; James Stanley, Earl of Derby, Latham House; Henry Lord Wilmot, father of the notorious Rochester; and Lord Talbot were among the King's attendants, the party numbering about sixty.

Jas. Gale. *Wolverhampton.*

THE KING'S HIDING PLACE, BOSCOBEL.

Thus fortified, the King returned into the wood, and spent the night of Friday with Carles in a thick-leaved oak, and here (or, according to tradition, in a large oak near the house), with his head in Carles's lap, he passed the most part of the Saturday in sleep, the Penderels meanwhile pursuing their daily avocations. Humphry had to go to Shifnal to pay his taxes to the parliamentary officers, and was severely examined as a suspect, for the fugitives were being tracked, but the ordeal was safely passed, and he returned to Boscobel. Some chickens were provided by the widow Penderel for supper, and afterwards the secret place where the Earl of Derby had formerly hidden was shown to the King, who decided to trust to it for the night. The subject of Sunday's dinner being broached, the King confessed to a preference for mutton. To obtain mutton in any neighbouring market was out of the question, so a neighbouring sheep-cote lost a sheep the next morning very early. Colonel Carles undertook the role of butcher, and despatched it with a dagger, and William carried it home. A leg was carried into the parlour, and his sacred majesty cut it into collops and fried it himself, the butcher-colonel acting as assistant cook.

A longer stay, however, became perilous, and a retreat to Moseley, the fine old English home of Mr. Thomas Whitgreave, was arranged. Moseley is seven miles distant from Boscobel, and some four from Wolverhampton. The flight took place at night, when the King, accompanied by the miller, upon whose horse he was mounted, by a circuitous route reached the friendly asylum. The services of the Penderel family were worthy a king's remembrance, and, to the credit of Charles, he never forgot them.

Whilst the King was staying at Boscobel, Lord Wilmot had found safety at or near Moseley, and also at Colonel Lane's house at Bentley, five or six miles away, and within two miles of Walsall. The Lanes, an ancient family of Wolverhampton, had owned Bentley more than two centuries. It had formed one of the Hays of Cannock Forest, and its park was then well stocked with deer. The present timber-hidden hall is a venerable and interesting mansion, but is a reconstruction of the house of 1651.

On Monday night Lord Wilmot visited the King at Mr. Whitgreave's house, returning to Bentley to mature a scheme for the royal fugitive's escape. Here a fortuitous circumstance favoured the King. Colonel Lane's sister, Jane Lane, was just about to start to pay a visit to her cousin, near Bristol, and had secured a safe conduct pass from Captain Stone, the Governor of Stafford, for herself and her servant.* What better chance could Charles have than to take the place of a servant, and to accompany Mistress Lane, and so ensure a safe journey as far as Bristol, on his way to the south coast? Colonel Lane, therefore, rode over to Moseley at midnight on Tuesday, and brought back the King to Bentley ere morning dawned. Here he was hastily instructed in his part, and, after a short retirement for sleep, he was suitably clothed for his part and amply provided with means for the journey. He mounted, and with his companion on the pillion behind, started away through the lanes and byeways to Great Barr and Erdington on that long ride which ended in his escape to France, and became memorable in the annals of the Stuarts.

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* Lord Wilmot, it is said, was to have enacted the part of the groom, and the pass may have been secured with this object.

BENTLEY HALL. (*From Plot's Staffordshire*).

VIEW OF WOLVERHAMTON.
(*From an old print.*)

The Goughs of Old Fallings.

OF the numerous English families of opulence and distinction originating from successful trading or the pursuit of commerce in the ancient burg towns and cities of the kingdom, Wolverhampton may certainly claim more than an average number.

In early times it enrolled among its people the Giffards, Wrottesleys, Jennings, and Levesons, subsequently it nurtured the Lanes, Goughs, and Turtons, and more recently the Molineaux, Fryers, Sparrows, Thorneycrofts, and others innumerable. And many stately homes of Staffordshire are those of descendants of men who have added lustre to the past history of the Town of Wool and Iron. Of these founders of families probably none have become better known than the rich Wolverhampton merchant, Henry Gough. It is told, in the geneaological records of English families, that the Gough-Calthorpes owe not a little of their advancement to an episode which brought this Henry Gough into contact with Charles I. in the time of his greatest need.

When, in October, 1642, King Charles spent Sunday in Wolverhampton, Henry Gough, Mercer, Mercator, or Draper, the first owner of Old Fallings, descended of a long line of wool staplers, was, if Burke is to be relied on, over 80 years of age. He had been thrice married and had several grand-children. According to Degge, he was a great usurer, and was so rich that, traditionally, he was assailed by the common folk with:—

"Here's old Justice Gough
Who has money enough."

The King was housed by Madam St. Andrew, a near connection or kinsman of Gough, who, on his part entertained the two young princes in his house.* The good folk of Wolverhampton loyally set about raising a sum of money for the King, but to their disgust the rich burgher, of whom much was expected, refused all assistance. At eventide, however, the aged merchant donned hat and cloak and sought the King, and insisted upon a personal interview. When face to face with Charles he drew from beneath his cloak a bag of gold, amounting, according to family tradition, to £1200, and presented it with the pretty speech, "May it please your Majesty to accept this, it is all the cash I have by me or would have brought more."

It was a bountiful gift, so bountiful that the King is said to have proffered him knighthood, which he refused; and that Charles II. accorded the honour unto his grand-son, as a recognition of the liberal act.

The loyal merchant died in 1655, and his son, John Gough, in 1665 (aged 57). In 1664, John was made an esquire by patent, signed William Dugdale Norroy. Of his children, Henry and Richard, were both knighted, the latter a celebrated East India merchant, purchased Middlemore's Manor of Edgbaston; and his grandson, in 1796, became Baron Calthorpe; whilst the former, Sir Henry, who had sixteen children,† purchased Perry Hall, and a moiety of the manor of Perry, in 1669, the year after his marriage with Mary, daughter of Sir Edward Littelton.

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* This would fix the year of the incident (as 1642 and not 1645, the Princes were then aged 12 and 9.

† Of these children, the 6th son, Harry, born at Perry, in 1681, went at the age of 11 to China with his uncle Richard; here he obtained the name of *Amy Whang*, or the white-haired boy. In 1717, he purchased for £13,600 the remainder of the Middlemore estates, including ancient burgages in the Bull Ring, an estate at Ladywood, and a farm of 25 acres, now marked by Gough Street, all in the neighbouring town of Birmingham, and large estates in Warwickshire and Worcestershire. These passed to his only son, Richard Gough, the eminent antiquary, of whom Staffordshire has good reason to be proud. This great scholar died in 1809, and his widow in 1833.

Upon the death of Sir Henry, in 1724, his son Walter, a great traveller and a very learned writer, became owner of Perry and Old Fallings,[*] and, in 1730, was succeeded by his son Walter, and he again, in 1773, by his son John, the eccentric "Squire Gough," who attained great notoriety by his parsimony and churlishness.[†]

[*By kind permission of J. A. Draycott, Birmingham.*]

PERRY HALL.

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[*] His wife, Martha Harwood, a niece of Sir Richard Hill, is said to have been lineally descended from Hereward, lord of Bourne (Hereward the Wake), the son of Leofric and Godiva.

[†] Of this oddity, Shaw (under "Perry Hall") has recorded, "Down to the present owner, John Gough, Esq., whose well-known *liberality* and *kindness* prohibited me giving, by personal inspection, even an external description of the old moated mansion. All then that I can say of it is, the situation is flat but richly wooded, and here is a small park of deer, the venison of which is mostly sold at an extravagant price, though the owner is possessed of about 4000*l.* per annum. However, as it is beneath the dignity of the historic page to dwell upon such facts, I shall draw a veil over the present scene; but, out of respect to his ancestors and a worthy relative, Richard Gough, of Enfield, Esq., the learned editor of "Camden," author of "Sepulchral Monuments," &c., shall give a pedigree of the family, under the more ancient seat of Old Fallings."

In 1844, on the death, without issue, of John, who succeeded "Squire Gough" in 1828, and purchased the other moiety of Perry, the representation of this ancient family devolved upon George, Lord Calthorpe; but Perry passed to the Hon. Frederick Gough-Calthorpe, third son of the first Baron Calthorpe, upon the succession of whose eldest son to the Barony his next brother, Augustus Cholmondeley, became lord of Perry, and upon his recent succession to the Calthorpe title and estates, the manor, with the ancient moated hall, and with it the prestige of a descent from the martial Gochs of the Principality—ancestors of Owen Glendower and the brave Sir Matthew Gough, who fought under Talbot, and a goodly line of Wolverhampton wool-staplers—has devolved upon his next brother, Captain the Hon. John Somerset Gough-Calthorpe.

ROCK HOUSES, NEAR KINVER EDGE.

Early Ironworkers.

DUD DUDLEY AND FIDDLER FOLEY.

WHEN Charles II. made his memorable midnight ride to Bentley, he would, perchance, obtain glimpses of the distant sea-coal fires of the watchmen at the pits. The whole district which is now ablaze at night with unearthly and lurid fires, had then but little changed from the time William Camden rode through it and set down in his note book:—

> "The south part of Staffordshire hath coles digged out of the earth and mines of iron. But whether more for their commoditie or hinderance I leave to the inhabitants who do or shall better understand it."

Meagre as this personal testimony is, it exceeds that of the itinerant Leland, who, some 40 years earlier, wrote "there are secoles at Weddesburie, a village near Walsall," also "At Wallesaul be pittes of secole."* Of

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* In 40 Elizabeth, 1597, three acres of land at Bloxwiche, near Hobbe Hey brooke, were granted to George Whithall, gent., conditionally that he should "serve all the inhabitants of Walsall with coals called 'dassell coalles," at the rate of 3d. for each horse, mare or geldinge load, and with others called 'bagge coalles' at 2d. per like load."—*Walsall Calendar.*

Birmingham, however, he wrote "A great part of the towne is maintained by smithes, who have their iron and sea-cole out of *Staffordshire*."

However probable, not to say assured, it may be that the mineral treasures of this district were known to the Saxon or even the Roman inhabitants,* yet authentic records of mining operations only extend back some three centuries previous to the visits of Leland and Camden. These records, however, with the survivals of the old workings or delves, chiefly in the vicinity of Wednesbury, where the sea coal lay near the surface, indicate where, in pre-Norman times, the minerals were worked.† But at the Conquest, as is shown in Domesday, the district was thickly wooded, it follows therefore that iron making was then a very limited industry, and for local requirements only.

Until quite recent times iron ore could only be smelted with charked or burnt wood, the real and original coal of our ancestors. Thus the reckless but unavoidable waste of our woods was gradually increasing for centuries, until ultimately large tracts of forest were entirely denuded of their woodlands,‡ and the ore had gradually to be taken to a greater distance from the pits, as being less costly than bringing thither the supply of wood for its conversion. As a natural result, the price of iron was lower at the distant forges, and consequently naylors and small ironworkers multiplied in villages remote from the pits, to the great disadvantage of the pit districts, or, as Camden suggests, to their hindrance.

A further result of this had been that the more expert workers in iron, the smiths, cutlers and lorymers settled in the surrounding towns, and in Birmingham, Walsall, Wolverhampton, and Dudley, the local industries of tanning, spinning, and wool working were being gradually superseded by the more lucrative working of iron.

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* Roman tools have been found in the ironstone workings, and iron it is known was smelted by the Romans at Worcester, but the ore would be brought from Coalbrookdale. Iron was smelted at Uttoxeter in the 13th century (possibly a survival of a very early furnace), also at Cannock Forest in 1588, and in 1560, a decayed forge with a chaffery, but not a furnace, existed at Little Aston; it belonged to Roger Fowke, probably the father of Dud Dudley's partner, friend and neighbour, Roger Fowke. In 1600, it was let to Thomas Parkes of Wednesbury, who entirely reconstructed the buildings and the mill dam. That a furnace was afterwards added is evident, for, in 1681, it was carried on by Philip Foley, it is needless to say for making charcoal iron.

† Allusions were made in the years 1272 and 1290 to pits of sea coal and iron mines in Lord Dudley's Manor of Sedgley, and about the same date to the mines of sea coal and iron in the Manor of Walsall, and in 1315 to the coal pits of Wednesbury.

‡ The will of Edward Lord Dudley, the possessor of extensive Woodlands to the west of Dudley dated 1585, contains the following—"Item, I wyll and bequeathe my hoole yron workes with all my owre fytt for to manteyne the same, and alsoe all my woddes and under woodes for the thoroughe mainteyninge of the same."

In Elizabeth's reign the water-power blast was introduced, and capitalists were attracted by the profits to be made from the purchase of extensive woods; thenceforth iron making was carried on at ever increasing distances from the pits. Formerly, as Dud Dudley tells us, by the old foot treadles, one furnace produced but 100 lbs. of iron per day; the output was now increased according to the power available. The effect upon the woodlands was soon felt. In the making of every ton of iron three loads of charcoal, the product of six loads of wood were consumed, and Acts of Parliament became necessary to limit the destruction of woods.

But the destruction went on. Substantial iron works set up near a running stream, with extensive woods at hand, took the place of the humble contrivances of the past, and the iron trade passed into the hands of wealthy men. The river Tame was speedily utilized, and two or three furnaces and forges were set up along its course,* sometimes by the conversion of an existing grist mill, sometimes by adapting a part of one. At Wyrley's Mill, Holford, Perry Barr, a furnace or iron work was started by Thomas Foley, *Esquire*, and the ironstone was conveyed there from the pits along pretty country lanes. In 1654, it was discarded and re-let as a blade mill. Nearer still to Birmingham, Aston furnace was started upon a diversion of Hockley Brook, by John Jennens, and became a stepping stone in acquiring the almost fabulous wealth for which the Jennens' family, descendants of a Birmingham innkeeper, became famous.†

In addition to the Dudleys, Levesons, Foleys, and Foulkes, the notes of Simon Degge state that the Chetwynds of Rugeley, Parkes of Willingsworth and Wednesbury, and Gorings of Bold, obtained their estates from iron works; that Mr. Parkes' grandfather carried nails on his back, and that Richard Foley was first a seller of nails.

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* At Bescote, on the site of the present sewage farm, a bloomery or furnace was long held by the Leveson's of Wolverhampton.

† The slag, or waste cinder, from Aston Furnace was thrown out upon a high sand bank, and William Hutton, the Birmingham historian, built up a theory that this mountain of cinder was the growth of two or three thousand years—the accumulated residue of Wednesbury pit, or sea coal. It is remarkable that Hutton was unaware of the fact that iron could not be smelted by pit coal. In 1651, John Jennens, by will, left Aston Furnace to his sons, with 100 loades of charcole and 30 tons of rough pigge iron. The furnace was afterwards converted to a wire mill.

The connection of the Foleys with the iron trade is one of considerable interest. Richard Foley, the son of a Dudley nail-maker, born in 1580, settled near Stourbridge, and amassed considerable wealth. He married the daughter of William Brindley, of the Hyde, Kinver, a man famed in the local story as introducing the German method of making iron to Kinver mill, the first erected in England for rolling and slitting iron.*

Brindley's son-in-law, Richard Foley, also undertook a journey into Sweden, at great risk, in order further to perfect the methods of manufacture. Coleridge tells the story of this enterprise of Foley's in his "Table Talk," as the best attested instance of enthusiasm existing.† And it is also repeated by Smiles in "Self Help," and in the "Dictionary of National Biography." It is probable that after Brindley had learnt the German methods, it was found that more desirable knowledge could be obtained from Sweden.‡

By the industry, skill, and enterprise of Richard Foley, and his son Thomas, extensive works were set up in far distant places, great wealth accumulated, and early in the next century the Foleys were enrolled among the Barons of England.

The credit of first discovering a method, where others had failed, of smelting iron with pit or sea coal, and discarding chark'd wood coal, must undoubtedly be given to Dud Dudley, a natural son of the Lord Dudley who acquired the Dudley ironworks in 1585. The following particulars of the remarkable but unfortunate Dud Dudley are condensed from his work, the "Metallum Martis."

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* According to this well-known story, Brindley, in his zeal to improve his trade, travelled into Germany, affected the character of a harmless, half-witted wanderer, and rambled among the ironworks. His oddities and eccentricities ensuring him a general goodwill. But, with watchful eye, he gained the knowledge he required, which, on his return home, he applied to the improvement of his works.

† Samuel Taylor Coleridge may have picked up this story in his visits to members of the Lloyd family, themselves engaged in the trade, and having opportunities of ascertaining its reliability.

‡ Richard Foley, in his work as a nail maker, it is said, observing the great labour and loss of time involved by the method then in use for dividing the rods of iron used in his trade, and the evils arising from the competition of the Swedish iron workers, resolved to journey to Sweden and acquire the secret of superiority. He set forth in the guise of a strolling musician, and with his fiddle under his arm, he journeyed on foot until he reached the mines of Dannemora, near Upsula. Here his skill as a musician and his natural geniality gained him a ready welcome from the ironworkers among whom he lingered. When he had, as he thought, attained the knowledge required he hastened home and obtained funds for the erection of the necessary machinery and buildings for slitting iron by the Swedish process. When, however, completed and set to work he found to his mortification that he had not completely mastered the necessary details. He thereupon again disappeared and once more visited the ironworks of Dannemora and returned triumphant, having discovered the cause of his previous failure.

Born in 1599, as a youth he took great delight in his father's ironworks, and at the age of twenty was fetched from college at Oxford to manage one furnace and two forges at Pensnet. But wood and charcoal growing then scant, and pit coal abounding,* he was led to alter the furnace, and obtain a blast from pit coal, and, animated by the result, made a second trial, when the quality of the iron proved good, although the quantity small. He thereupon wrote to Lord Dudley in London to obtain a patent from the King and received the following reply:—

"*Son* Dudley,

"The King's Majesty being at *New-Market*, I sent *Parkes* thither on Saturday to some friends of mine, to move the King's Majesty for my pattent, which be coming on the Sunday morning. In the afternoon His Majesty sent a warrant to Master Atturney to despatch my pattent . . . . I have been this night with Master Atturney, who will make hast for me. God bless you, and commend me unto all my friends. Your loving Father,

"EDWARD DUDLEY."

"March 10, 1619 (1620)."

A year later this same Parkes (Richard Parkes of Willingsworth, brother-in-law to Dud Dudley) carried some pit coal iron to the Tower, by the King's command, to be tried, and he there had a fowling gun made from it, which was afterwards taken from him by Colonel Levison, Governor of Dudley Castle, and never restored.

The next year all the works were damaged in a great May day storm flood, and as soon as these were repaired, rival ironmasters prevailed with the King to give his product very severe tests, which, when applied, Dudley claimed that they silenced opposition. Then, as Parliament had annulled monopolies, his rivals alleged Dudley's patent was a monopoly and got it restricted to 14 years. Dud Dudley now claimed to have produced and sold annually great store of good and merchantable iron. The rest of the story is not so clear. Having erected new furnaces and extensive works, he "was by force thrown out of them and the Bellows of his new Furnace and Invention by riotous persons cut to pieces." He was also wearied with law suits, riots, and wrongful imprisonments for several thousand pounds, until his patent expired.†

In 1638 he had a renewed patent from Charles 1st, but the Civil War put an end to his hopes. He was an ardent Royalist, and found little favour from his enemies. Other patents were granted to numerous inventors, and Dudley was most persevering, but the measure of their success must be gauged by Dudley's admission that whilst his greatest production was one ton, the new furnaces with Charcoal produced two or three tons in 24 hours, and smelting with pit coal was never successfully achieved until the introduction of the steam engine.

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* The following were reasons given by Dud Dudley for dispensing with the use of charcoal:—"Within 10 miles of Dudley, near 2000 smiths and many ironworks be decayed for want of wood (yet formerly a mighty woodland country). Lord Dudley's woods and works decayed; pit coal and ironstone abounding, but of little use. The coal mines are 10, 11, and 12 yards thick, and the uppermost coal gotten in open works." And elsewhere he states that "the trade of 20,000 smiths or naylors is so bad that many of them are ready to starve or steal."

† These pecuniary difficulties were doubtless due to the impecuniosity of his father, a man, of all the Sutton Dudleys, the most worthless. His estate, long in the hands of a receiver, had now entirely gone from him, and he was overwhelmed with debts.

What has been said as to the making of charcoal iron in the south applies also to all other parts of the county, interesting survivals of furnaces and forges yet exist in the wooded districts of the Churnet and the Dane.

ANCIENT BRIDGE AT PERRY.

Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton.

THAT a book which treats of a branch of sport should have become a classic, occupying a place of honour in the national literature, betokens in its author a mastery of much else beside the craft of which he writes, and this is undoubtedly true of "The Compleat Angler" and its author, "honest old Izaak Walton," whose intimate connection with the county of Stafford is one of its glories. The author of this fascinating book reveals in its pages a simple yet beautiful character, and the possession of a wide range of learning, and that rare literary art in which the art itself is deftly concealed.

"Here sits, in secret, blest Theology,
Waited upon by grave Philosophy,
Both natural and moral: History,
Deck'd and adorn'd with flowers of Poetry,
The matter and expression striving which
Shall most excel in worth, yet not seem rich."*

When, in 1593, Izaak Walton first saw the light, Stafford, with its grand old church and its narrow streets of half-timbered houses, was closely hemmed in with surrounding walls and gates. He was born on the 9th of August, and baptized 21st September. His father, Jervis Walton, is supposed to be a son of George Walton of Yoxall, one of the outlying villages of Needwood Forest. Lying between the river of Trent, the glory of the shire and the delight of the fisherman, and the pretty stream of Sherbourn, and some three miles from Alrewas, Yoxall is the ideal place, as the origin of our great angler's family, and the name of Walton is found in the district for some centuries previously.

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* Christopher Harvey: "To the Reader of 'The Complete Angler.'"

George Walton's will, made in 1571, describes him as "late Baylie of Yoxall,"* and this is all that is known of him. When Izaak was years old, in 1597, his father died and was buried at St. Mary's, Stafford. Of his circumstances, nothing is known. Young Walton's education would therefore be limited to at most a few years in the grammar school, which then stood in St. Mary's churchyard.

STAFFORD CHURCH.

In the waters of the Sow, Shallowford, the little Penk, and its other tributaries, with perhaps an occasional walk of four miles to where it joins the greater Trent at Shugborough, young Walton would take his first lessons in that delightful pursuit of which he was destined to become the laureate, but these opportunities were of brief duration. Before he was fourteen he must have been sent to London and apprenticed to a Haberdasher, Milliner, or Draper.*

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* The will of George Walton was proved by his widow, 7th April, 1571, and is in the Bishop's Registry of Lichfield; in it "Jervis Walton" is mentioned as one of his sons.

Sometime prior to 1624, Walton set up in business as a Milliner and Draper, in Fleet Street, and was tenant of one-half of a house in the very quaint and ancient block at the west corner of Chancery Lane, near to St. Dunstan's Church, of which his friend, Dr. Donne, was then vicar. Through this friendship Walton's acquaintance with Dr. King, Bishop of London, and Sir Henry Wotton and other eminent Churchmen, probably originated.

In spite of circumstances which bound him to the haberdasher's counter, Izaak Walton seems to have nourished a love of literature at an early age, for at the time he was twenty a small poem entitled "The Love of Amos and Laura," by S. P., was published, with a poetical dedication "To my approved and much respected friend, Iz. Wa.," from which it appears that the little book was published on Walton's recommendation. Walton's first serious contribution to literature arose out of his intimacy with the circle of friends referred to above, for sometime after the death of Donne, Sir Henry Wotton purposed writing a biography of the deceased divine, to be prefixed to a volume of Donne's sermons, but abandoned the project, and the task devolved on Walton, the work being published in 1640. His fondness for penning epistolary and dedicatory verses is evinced by the many productions of this character from his pen which are to be found in the *prolegomena* of various books of that period. From some of these we gather evidence of his growing affection for the rod and line, as in the "address to the reader" prefixed to Quarles' "Shepherd's Eclogues" (1646) which is with good reason attributed to Walton, in which we read of the gentle shepherd "walking a gentle pace

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* Sir Harris Nicholas, the biographer of Walton, suggests that one Henry Walton, a Haberdasher, of Whitechapel, London, was at once Uncle and Master to Izaak, a suggestion so far as the relationship goes most probable, but another statement made upon some show of authority is that he was apprenticed to one Holmes, a Sempter, with whom he stayed until 22 or 23 years of age, in which case he would be 15 or 16 when apprenticed.

ON THE MANIFOLD.

towards a brook . . . . . fitted with angle, lines, and flies . . . intending all diligence to beguile the timorous trout." Probably at the time Walton penned these lines the charm of his fishing excursions had become enhanced by their being taken alongside the beautiful streams of his native county; for, soon after the outbreak of the Civil War, according to Anthony A'Wood, finding it "dangerous for honest men" to remain in London, "he left that city, and lived sometimes at Stafford and elsewhere, but mostly in the families of the eminent clergymen of England, by whom he was much beloved."*

Perhaps it is not too much to say that it is to Walton's enforced sojourn in his native county that we owe the production of his most famous book—the one by which he will be longest remembered. Certain it is that its publication followed speedily upon that period of retirement, being published in 1653, and dedicated "to his most honoured friend," John Offley of Madely Manor in Staffordshire, himself no mean angler. We may therefore, without hesitancy, regard "The Compleat Angler, or the Contemplative Man's Recreation," as having, to a certain extent, been inspired by the angling rambles which Walton took, in the company of his brother of the angle, along the various Staffordshire streams—such as the Sow, the Trent, the Manifold, and other streams with which the county abounds. More particularly would he find pleasure and food for contemplation in the lovely and romantic valley of the Dove, "the pleasantness of which river," Walton wrote, "and of the mountains and meadows about it, cannot be described, unless Sir Philip Sydney, or Mr. Cotton's father, were again alive to do it." Sometimes he would be accompanied on these enterprises, perchance, by another friend, Master Edward Powell, "of the Borough of Stafford, Minister," who wrote a poetical eulogium on his "most ingenious friend's book, 'The Compleat Angler,'" which appears among the *prolegomena* of the book.

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* After the battle of Worcester, when the cause of the Stuarts had collapsed for the time, Walton's loyalty caused him to be entrusted with a delicate and difficult commission. Although the greater portion of the valuables belonging to the King had fallen into Cromwell's hands, the King's lesser George was preserved by Colonel Blague, who, according to Sir Harris Nicholas, having taken shelter at Blore Pipe House, two miles from Eccleshall, then the residence of Mr. George Barlow, delivered the jewel into that gentleman's custody. In the ensuing week Mr. Barlow carried it to Robert Milward, Esq., who was at that time a prisoner in the garrison of Stafford, and Milward afterwards gave it into "the trusty hands" of Mr. Izaak Walton to convey to Colonel Blague, who was confined by the Parliament in the Tower of London." Blague, it is said, afterwards managed to escape from the Tower, and restored the George to its Royal owner.

The most notable companion of Walton's on these fishing expeditions, however, was Charles Cotton of Beresford Hall—a fine old mansion, which overlooked the Dove in its upper reaches in Beresford Dale. The friendship between Walton and Cotton seems, from a stanza in Cotton's commendatory verses on Walton's "Life of Dr. Donne," to have risen in the first place from a friendship with Cotton's father, while Cotton himself styles Walton

THE STRAITS, DOVEDALE.

"the best friend I ever knew." With him Walton must have explored most of the waters of his native county. The Trent, "one of the finest rivers in the world, and the most abounding with excellent trout, and all sorts of delicate fish"—to quote Cotton's eulogium of this river,—would claim the first place, perhaps, to the attentions of such a pair of enthusiastic fishermen. Walton's inquiring mind, so fond of reasoning out and seeking explanations of curious phenomena, would doubtless also lead him to explore again and again the Manifold, which for many miles buries itself and becomes a subterranean stream. The picturesque beauties, too, of this river, as well as of the Hamps and, most of all, the Dove, would awaken in the

BED OF THE MANIFOLD (SUMMER).

grand old nature-lover feelings of intense admiration and pride—pride that such river scenery should be found in his native county. We can imagine the two enthusiastic anglers spending many happy hours in the exquisitely beautiful and awe-inspiring "Straits of the Dove," seeking to beguile the wary trout with which this part of the stream abounds, or scaling together the steep ascent to Reynard's Cave, or standing with wondering admiration before such mighty monoliths as that called Ilam Rock, or the Pickering Tor.

Nor would the lower reaches of the Dove claim all their attention. The stern and naked cliffs which border the stream for several miles, between Milldale and Beresford Dale, would be visited and explored from Cotton's hospitable mansion. Here the vegetation which clothes the lower reaches is wanting, and for miles the bare crags and screes, all grey, purple, and yellow, crop out from the green hillside, affording rich varieties and contrasts of colour, while the bed of the stream is strewn with boulders. The long ravine called Narrowdale forms part of this rocky valley, and here, says the gossiping Plot, "the inhabitants, for that quarter of the year wherein the sun is nearest the tropic of Capricorn, never see it [*i.e.* the sun] at all; and at length, when it does begin to appear again, they never see it till about one by the clock, which they call thereabout the Narrowdale noon; using it proverbially when they would express a thing done late at noon." Whether there were any "inhabitants" at the time Walton and Cotton traversed this valley is doubtful, as the long stretch of valley from Milldale to Beresford Dale is now a wilderness and a solitary place, with no signs of life save of the cattle in the stream, and the birds on the hillsides, which here are precipitous, their tops seeming crowned with castles and turrets, from the fantastic shapes assumed by crag and cliff.

Thinking that the "Compleat Angler" was defective in one branch of the subject, Walton applied to Cotton to furnish him with a treatise on the "Art of Fly Fishing." This request was neglected for some time, but when, in 1676, the author had a new edition of the work in the press, he reminded Cotton of his request, with the result that the second part of the "Angler" was written by Cotton in little over ten days. In it he assumes the character of *Piscator*, which in the first part was assumed by Walton, and he takes occasion, in this character, to pronounce a eulogy on his friend and on the "Compleat Angler," to *Venator* (a character which is continued from the first into the second part) saying:—

> "My opinion of Mr. Walton's book is the same with every man's that understands the art of angling, that it is an excellent good one; and that the fore-mentioned gentleman understands as much of fish and fishing as any man living. But I must tell you, further, that I have the happiness to know his person, and to be intimately acquainted with him; and in him to know the worthiest man, and to enjoy the best and truest friend that any man ever had."

In further testimony of his affection for Walton, Cotton had, not long before, built a little fishing-house on the Staffordshire side of the banks of the Dove, near to Beresford Hall, and in commemoration of their friendship he had caused a stone to be placed in the centre of the building, on which was carved the quaint monogram which has become famous, in which his own and Walton's initials are combined. This monogram was engraved as a vignette for the title of Cotton's contribution to the "Angler."

In this second part, Cotton gives a good description of Dove Dale and its wonders, and of many things in this part of Staffordshire. He makes *Viator* say, on approaching Dove Dale, "Bless me! What mountains are here! are we not in Wales?" To which the delighted dalesman replies, "No, but in almost as mountainous a country; and yet these hills, though high, bleak, and craggy, breed and feed good beef and mutton above ground, and afford good lead within." The stranger expresses surprise at the "Alps" he is called upon to cross, and suggests that he will sit down and write his travels, so impressed is he by the wonders and picturesque beauties of Dove Dale. He is surprised at the sight of Alstonfield Church, thinking he had gone "a stage or two beyond Christendom" in this wild and picturesque region.

But, *Piscator* has another surprise in store for him. As he reaches the lovely Beresford Dale, where the Dove flows more smoothly and the scenery becomes pastoral, *Viator* exclaims:—

> "But what have we got here? A rock springing up in the middle of the river! This is one of the oddest sights I ever saw. *Piscator:* Why, Sir, from that Pike, that you see standing

up there distant from the rock, this is called Pike Pool, and young Mr. Izaak Walton* was so pleased with it as to draw it in landscape, in black and white, in a blank book I have at home, as he has done several prospects of my house also, which I keep for a memorial of his favour, and will show you when we come up to dinner."

PIKE POOL, BERESFORD DALE.

Of the various poetical works of Cotton, as well as of the worthy and lasting work of Walton, in his "Lives of Donne, Wotton, Hooker, Herbert, and Sanderson," it is scarcely necessary to speak here. One or two matters of Staffordshire interest, however, in relation to the latter may be mentioned. A copy of the "Lives" was given by Walton to Walter, Lord Aston, which is preserved in the library at Tixall. It bears the inscription, "For my Lord Aston. Iz. Wa.," underneath which Lord Aston wrote :

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* Son of the Author of the "Compleat Angler."

"Izake Walton gift to me, June y 14, 1670, w^{ch} I most thankfully for his memmory off mee acknowledge a greate kindnesse.—Walter Aston."

The second separate edition of the "Life of Dr. Donne" was dedicated by Walton, "to my noble and honoured friend, Sir Robert Holt of Aston, in the county of Warwick, Bart.," whose fair estate at Aston adjoins the boundary of the county of Stafford on the one side. Sir Robert Holte was the grandson of John King, Bishop of London, his father, Edward Holte, having married that prelate's daughter,—for which act he suffered the severe displeasure of his father,* and a life-long banishment from Aston Hall. Bishop Henry King of Chichester, a pleasant versifier, whose friendship Walton enjoyed, was Sir Robert Holte's uncle, hence the friendship of Walton for the young baronet of Aston.

Izaak Walton was twice married. His first wife was Rachel Floud, whose family was allied to that of the Cranmers, the descendants of the martyred archbishop. This marriage took place in St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet Street, hard by Walton's place of business, on the 27th December, 1626. Fourteen years later she died, and, in 1646, Walton married Anne, the daughter of Thomas Ken, an Attorney, of the Somersetshire family of Ken, to which the famous bishop belonged. It is said that a line in one of the songs in the "Angler" originally bore a reference to Walton's first wife, and was afterwards altered to suit the second; the *Chlora* of the first version (an anagram on the name "Rachel," with one vowel altered) being subsequently changed to the name *Kenna*, in reference to his second wife's family name, a circumstance which, Sir Harris Nicolas says, "unfortunately brings to recollection the story of a man who had a picture painted of his first wife, and marrying again after her decease, desired the artist to erase the face from the canvas, and to introduce the features of his new partner."

In the evening of his life the love of his early home became manifest. In his prosperity he had purchased a farm of 50 acres at Shallowford, near his native town, and in his verses, entitled "The Angler's Wish," his thoughts turned to this spot, expressing the wish that he might

"Loiter long days near Shawford Brook."

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* Sir Thomas Holte, the first baronet, who built Aston Hall.

This property, at his death, was bequeathed for charitable uses to his native town; but he had previously made a gift of 900 yards of land to the poor of Stafford.

Walton died at the house of his son-in-law, Dr. Hawkins, at Winchester, on the 15th of December, 1683, during a severe frost which hastened his end. One son—the Isaac Walton, jun., referred to by Cotton—and one daughter, Anne, the wife of Dr. Hawkins, survived him. He was buried in Winchester Cathedral, in a chapel in the south aisle, called Prior Silkstead's Chapel. A large black marble slab covers his remains. His memory is also kept green in his native county. Recently the townsfolk of Stafford have erected a beautiful and appropriate tablet in St. Mary's Church, in honour and memory of their great townsman; and anglers, whose pursuits take them to the favourite stream of the famous brothers of the angle, are reminded of the laureate of the gentle craft, by the name of the "Izaak Walton" Hotel, which stands at the entrance to Dove Dale.

THE "IZAAK WALTON" HOTEL, DOVE DALE.

Faith and Freedom.

UPON *Wednesday, the 13th of August, 1679, at the Assizes held at* Stafford *for the said county*, Andrew Bromwich, of Perry Barr, *and* William Atkins, of Wolverhampton, *being both Seminary Priests, were brought to their Tryal and Convicted before the Right Honourable Sir* William Scroggs, *Knight, Lord Chief Justice of* England, *and one of his Majesties' Justices of Assize there*." Such is the folio report of "The Tryal of William Bromwich, printed by the sole authority of William Scroggs by Robert Pawlett, at the Bible in Chancery Lane, 1679."

Judge Scroggs had charged the Sheriff to "returne a *good* jury." One Allen, however, had been heard to say "Nothing was done against the priests above and he would do nothing against them here;" he was therefore discharged the jury and committed to prison. Three more were discharged upon suspicion of being popishly affected, and, when twelve safe men had been sworn, one Ann Robinson, a Catholic, but now converted, was called and testified that Bromwich had, at Christmas previously, administered the sacrament, at Perry Barr, to her and seven or eight others, twice at Mr. Birch's and twice at Mr. Purcell's. Two other Robinsons, who had not been converted from their faith, were "bullied" by the judge into making corroborative admissions, and the jury were thus charged by the judge, "You had better be rid of one priest than three felons," and having duly found the prisoner guilty of high treason, were told "You have found a good verdict, and if I had been one of you I should have found the same myself."

By the same jury, and upon similar evidence, William Atkins was found guilty of the like practices at Mr. Stamford's at Wolverhampton, also at Well Head at Ham.

Both prisoners were sentenced "That you be drawn upon hurdles to execution, to be hanged by the neck, cut down alive and mutilated, your bowels taken out and burnt in your view, your heads severed from your bodies, your bodies be divided into quarters and disposed of at the King's pleasure. And the God of infinite mercy be merciful to your souls."

THE OLD COLLEGE, OSCOTT.
From "The Oscotian."

The Rev. Andrew Bromwich, although born at Longnor, was resident at Perry Barr and Oscott, lordships belonging to Catholic familes, the Wyrleys, Birchs, Stamfords, and Goughs. The Well-head and Ham would appear to be near Wolverhampton, but there are ancient holdings bearing these names in Perry and Hamstead. Bromwich was reprieved, and ultimately set at liberty, (probably in 1685, on the accession of James II.,) when he returned to his ministrations. He was the founder and priest of the mission at Old Oscott, and died there in 1702, having willed his property for Church uses.

Andrew Bromwich may thus be looked upon as the originator of that religious community which has developed into the great Catholic seminary of St. Mary of Oscott.* Among the treasured possessions of the college is the chair of Andrew Bromwich, thus described:—

> This chair belonged to the Rev. Andrew Bromwich, the founder of the mission at Old Oscott. He was tried and condemned to death by Lord Chief Justice Scroggs, in 1679, for being a Catholic priest. He was, however, afterwards reprieved, and after lying some time in prison, his release seems to have been connived at as he died at Old Oscott in 1702.

The new college, which stands on the elevated plateau overlooking the valley of the Tame, is, as it were, a beacon of religious liberty, eminently typical of the great change which has taken place since Andrew Bromwich ministered to the people of Oscott and Perry. At the latter place, an ancient house called "Well Head," belonging to a Catholic Trust, still stands. It has the reputation of having been formerly used as a masshouse, and may possibly have been the scene of the administration of those rites which so disturbed Judge Scroggs. In Perry village, too, a few ancient cottages survive, a new church has risen and the old ford has gone, but there is nothing to indicate the larger population of Perry in the days of the second Charles. Yet in the years 1678-80 no fewer than thirty-seven men and women, nailers, weavers, blacksmiths, milners, husbandmen, and labourers were certified into the Exchequer as popish recusants, and they had the alternative of abjuring or being persecuted. At the head of this list stands the name of "Andreas Bromwich, *gen*," a man whom the terrors of hanging and quartering failed to change, and who recanted not the faith he held. Such a man to-day is honoured, and the noble college he originated is a lasting memorial to his worth.

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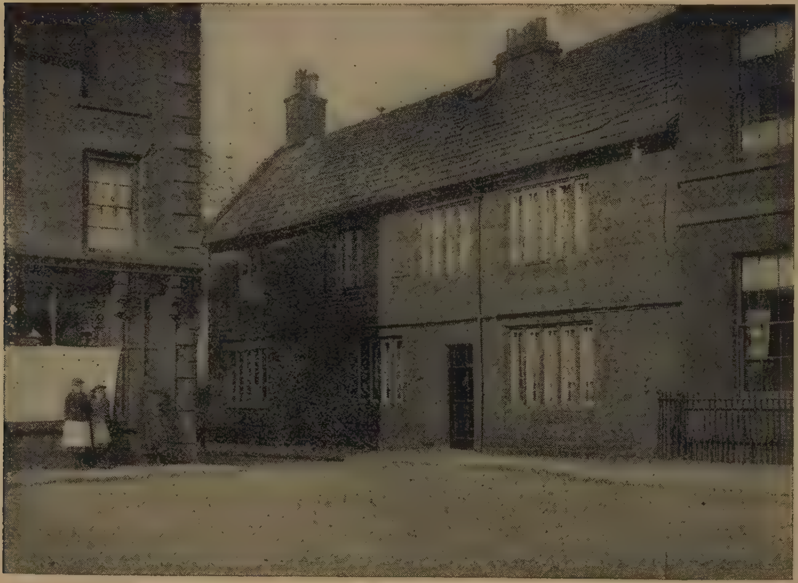
* Andrew Bromwich was possibly a member of the somewhat numerous family of the name at Erdington, and was also connected with the Dorringtons of Gayton, Dunston near Penkridge, Coton, and Stafford, where the ancient high house was built in 1557, by Richard Dorrington. The last of the family was Juliana Dorrington of the old mission at Oscott. She was a benefactor to that church and died there, 1730. In 1702, a Mary Dorrington witnessed the will of Bromwich, at Old Oscott.

The Rise and Fall of a Famous Chancellor.

THE story of the remarkable career of the son of an obscure Staffordshire lawyer, who rose to the Woolsack, and, after a notable career, "was precipitated with disgrace from the highest station a subject can hold in this kingdom," is one full of interest, but it can only be briefly touched upon in these pages.

Thomas Parker, afterwards Earl of Macclesfield, was born at Leek, on the 23rd of July, 1666, the son of an attorney in that town, who afterwards moved to Newcastle, in the same county, his mother being the daughter of Colonel Venables, of a respectable Cheshire family. Oliver Heywood, one of the ejected Nonconforming ministers, records in his diary (1666) that Mrs. Parker had married against her father's consent, and implies that the marriage had brought trouble to the young wife.

Young Tom Parker was sent to the Free Grammar School in the neighbouring town of Newport, in Shropshire, and he and a youth named Tom Withers (who was afterwards a shoemaker), were reputed to be the two cleverest boys in the school. Leaving school, he became articled as a clerk to become an attorney. In the middle of his apprenticeship he was entered at the Inner Temple, being ambitious of being called to the Bar, and subsequently entered at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was called to the Bar in 1691, attended the Midland Circuit, and soon won fame as "the silver-tongued counsel." Lord Campbell repeats the old story that, before being called to the Bar, he had been placed on the roll of attorneys, and practised as an attorney in Derby for some time; and he imagines that, "struck with immense awe at beholding the judges in their scarlet robes," and impressed with the idea that he could have done better than the barristers to whom he had entrusted briefs, he resolved to become a member of "the superior grade of the profession." All this, however, must be regarded as apocryphal, more particularly in the light of the fact that he had become a student at the Inner Temple at the age of eighteen.



W. H. Horne, *Leek.*

BIRTHPLACE OF LORD MACCLESFIELD, AT LEEK.

Parker was returned to Parliament for Derby in 1705, in the Whig interest, and was elected a Bencher of the Inner Temple about the same time. Soon afterwards he was raised to the order of the quoif, as one of the Queen's Serjeants, and was knighted at Windsor Castle, July 9th, 1705. In 1710 he distinguished himself above all others in the impeachment of Dr. Sacheverell,* and, according to Burnet, "did copiously justify both the Revolution and the present Administration." The Lord Chief Justice Holt died during the proceedings against the famous Dr. Sacheverell, and Parker was instantly appointed to succeed him. For eight years he held this high office with credit and impartiality, although often barked and snarled at by the Tory wits, and even by Defoe. Soon after his appointment, upon a change of Government, he was offered the Great Seal, but he declined the honour, and earned for himself the commendation of being "the first lawyer who ever refused an absolute offer of the Seals from a conscientious difference of opinion." Upon the accession of George I., however, he no longer entertained scruples against accepting the honours which party government had to offer him. In March, 1716, he was raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Parker of Macclesfield, took his place in the House of Lords, and returned to the arena of politics, and in May, 1718, exchanged the Bench for the Woolsack, and received from the King a present of £14,000, as well as a pension of £1,200 a year for his son. On the 15th November, 1721, he was created Viscount Parker of Ewelme and Earl of Macclesfield.

But he was destined to enjoy his high position only for a comparatively short period. The breath of slander was busy about him, and charges of defalcations in the offices of some of the Masters in Chancery finally fastened themselves upon the Chancellor himself. In February, 1725, Lord Macclesfield was impeached at the Bar of the House of Lords, charged with selling Masterships in Chancery, with receiving bribes, and with conniving at the fraudulent practices of the Masters. In spite of his impassioned challenge, in which he submitted his whole life and conduct to the scrutiny of his judges, he was found guilty by the unanimous voice of the ninety-three peers present. He was deprived of the Great Seal, and sentenced to pay a fine of £30,000 to the King, and to imprisonment in the Tower until the fine should be paid. Here he remained six weeks, until the amount of the fine was raised, and having been released, he withdrew into the obscurity of country life, living in a small house near Derby. Lord Campbell suggests that it is possible the fallen Chancellor may have met, in the end of his career, the schoolfellow and companion of his youth, Tom Withers, during his retirement. "It is pleasant to think," he says, "that the two schoolfellows socially met when the one occupied a stall at Newport, and the other was Lord Chief Justice of England; and that they afterwards renewed their correspondence when the one, having lost all his customers, was reduced to penury, and the other had been precipitated with disgrace from the highest station a subject can hold in this kingdom." The obloquy which surrounded the fallen Chancellor followed him into his retirement, and it became a common saying that "Staffordshire had produced three of the greatest rogues that ever existed—Jack Sheppard, Jonathan Wild, and Lord Macclesfield."

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* The first preferment of Dr. Sacheverell was the curacy of Cannock Church.

Lord Macclesfield lived "in a state of listless existence" nearly seven years, and died on the 28th of April, 1732.

W. H. Horne, *Leek.*

ST. EDWARD'S STREET, LEEK.

The Pretender in Staffordshire.

ONCE only since 1645, when Charles the First marched with his shattered forces through Staffordshire, has the county been excited with the roll of the drum and the call to battle. After a century of peace, however, in 1745, another Charles Stuart, like his great grandfather an outcast and a wanderer, inscribed upon his banner the motto, "*tandens triumphans*" and marched through the Shire in quest of a crown.

No more daring attempt to recover a kingdom is recorded than this remarkable raid of Bonnie Prince Charlie on behalf of his father James the Pretender. Fifty-five years had elapsed since the Abdication of James II., and thirty years since the abortive invasion of his son Prince James. The present opportunity was, however, not ill chosen. Time had weakened, but not destroyed, the old yearning of the Jacobites. George II., who had reigned 18 years, was on the Continent, and the King's army, under the inexperienced Duke of Cumberland, the King's younger son, was in Flanders, where it had just met with severe defeats at the hands of the French.

On the 14th July, 1745, "Prince" Charlie the Chevalier, aged 25, left Brittany on his Quixotic expedition. He landed on the coast of Lochaber, and on the 16th August unfurled the standard of the old *regime*. The home government had plenty on their hands, and his advent was lightly treated. A reward of £30,000 was offered for his apprehension, and the King was urged to return home, but a month of inactivity enabled the Chevalier to reach Edinburgh,* where he proclaimed his father king, and marched out through Musselburgh to give battle to the forces of General Cope.

The nation was now startled by the intelligence of the terrible and disastrous defeat of Cope's army at Prestonpans, where a battle was fought and won at daybreak on the 21st September. The English army and its royal general, with 6000 Dutch auxiliaries, or mercenaries, were sent for, and the north of England was scared.

W. H. Horne, Leek.
ANCIENT COLUMN, ST. EDWARD'S CHURCH, LEEK.

A fatal mistake was, however, now made by the Chevalier. Had he at once marched south with his flushed army there was nothing to oppose his entering London; † but he dallied at Holyrood and Diddistone until the 1st November, and not until the 6th did he cross the English border. Meanwhile the king's army had landed at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Carlisle was captured on the 15th ‡ at a cost of six days' delay.

From Carlisle the Highlanders made a straggling march in three columns, the van of the army being generally two days in advance of its rear, and on the 28th Manchester was reached.

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* The General of the Scotch forces, Sir John Cope, marched north to meet the Highland rebels. When he had advanced nearly to Inverness, he heard that he had missed them, and that Perth, 100 miles to the south, was in their hands. He returned by sea from Aberdeen to North Berwick, near Prestonpans, where he was met by the enemy.

† "London," said a contemporary print, "lies open as a prize to the first comers, whether Scotch or Dutch."

‡ Two days after the fall of Carlisle, General Wade arrived with the army from Newcastle, but finding himself too late, he marched back again.

On the same day the duke of Cumberland, fresh from his failures in Flanders, reached Lichfield. The royal army was at length being mustered in Staffordshire. A letter, dated from Lichfield, November 29th, to the panic-stricken people of Liverpool, signed, "Your good friend, William," says, "This army will be formed in a day or two." The army was formed; including mercenaries it numbered 10,500 foot and 1270 horse, with artillery. It was cantoned from Tamworth to Stafford, making, it is said, a very fine appearance.

The vanguard of the army, Kingstone's light horse, moved to Newcastle, and on the 1st and 2nd December was actually in Leek, but fell back to meet the Duke then nearing Newcastle.

Leaving Manchester on Saturday, November 30, the Highland army was divided, one section marching through Knutsford to Congleton, and the other to Macclesfield. On Monday, the 2nd December, 2000 of the first portion entered Congleton, and in the evening a party of their Hussars crossed into Staffordshire, and reached Talk-o'-th'-Hill, where at the Red Lyon Inn, one Captain Vere was taken prisoner; much liquor was drank, and mine host's horses attached. An alarm was sent to Newcastle four miles away,* where five regiments of horse and foot of the Duke's army lay. These beat a precipitate retreat before the handful of Highlanders, who marched onward to Bagnall, and made Justice Meverill for a brief period their prisoner,† *en route* for Ashbourne. Meanwhile, the second portion of the Scots reached Gawsworth on Monday. It was now that the strategetic movement, which so puzzled the royal duke, was made. Hitherto their march shaped for Shrewsbury. On Tuesday the 3rd, alarmed by the news from Newcastle, and apprehending an immediate attack, the duke drew up his army in battle array on the open town fields of Stone, and there patiently waited until nightfall, and then withdrew into the little town of Stone.*

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* Hearing of the approach of the rebels the drums beat to arms, which put the inhabitants in the utmost confusion. The regiments were all drawn up on the parade, and rested under arms some time, when, about twelve o'clock at night, they marched out of *Newcastle*, leaving their baggage unloaden in the market-place, and retreated to *Stone Town-field*, where the Duke drew up his army and artillery, expecting that the rebels would come. On the 3rd Tuesday, his royal highness ordered his army into *Stone* for quarters.—*Narrative of Volunteer Ray*.

† Justice Meverill is said to have had a speedy revenge a week later. A rebel scout was captured, and hung on a sign post. He had him flayed like a calf, and sent his hide to the tan yard.

But on the previous day, the whole of the wide straggling Highland forces had suddenly and rapidly turned towards Leek. The extreme eastern section, and with it probably the "Bonnie Prince," reaching as far as Dane Bridge and Swythamley, entered Leek, on Tuesday morning over Gun Moor and Haregate, whilst the main portion of the Congleton section converged upon the same point, its more advanced troops hastening to Ashbourne.

The Chevalier's army was a remarkable one—the Camerons, the Stuarts, the McDonalds, and other clans, each distinct in garb, followed their own chiefs; and the French contingent, the adventurous recruits, English, Irish, and Scotch, ragged and poorly equipped, had their own leaders. The gallant Charles—bravely apparelled in tartan silk and red velvet, with feathered bonnet of blue, and wearing his scarf and jewelled Order of St. Andrew; tall and comely of person, winning of speech, gallant to the ladies, and courteous in his bearing to all, and withal a sharer with his meanest followers of all the hardships of the march—naturally formed the central figure of the wild horde, as surrounded by a band of picked Highlanders, with a goodly share of the standards, and the hundred pipers of the thirteen battalions, he wheeled into the ancient and famous market place of Leek. Assuredly a rarer show had never been witnessed by the good folk of the old town, nor for centuries had the market place been the scene of such a motley gathering.†

During their stay in Leek, the rebels spent their time in shooting at the old Norman cross in the churchyard, and in sharpening their claymores and broadswords in readiness for the battle which appeared imminent.‡

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* This change of the Chevalier's plans is humorously given by the Bellman of Glasgow, Donald Graham:

To Staffordshire he came at last,
Where the Duke's army lay 'fore him,
Well prepared for to devour him.
He here to fight had no desire,
Took east the muirs to Derbyshire.
Directed his rout by th' town of Leek,
Left Cumberland to claw his cheek;
Kept south by east to Derby town,
In full career for London boun'.

† In the days of the fighting earls of Chester, Leek must have frequently been the scene of great military gatherings, and in the year 1318, the famous assembly of the king, two Roman cardinals, nine English bishops, and other great magnates took place here for the making the peace between the king and Thomas, Lord of Lancaster.

‡ Long afterwards, the visit of Bonnie Prince Charlie was a treasured memory, and Mary Toft of Haregate, probably a daughter of Quaker Toft, who entertained his visitors, remembered being hoisted upon the shoulders of a Highlander, and told to look at her future sovereign; whilst Sarah Sharrett of Pool End remembered the Prince shaking hands with all the girls assembled to see him pass.—*Sleigh's Leek.*

But the glory was of brief duration. Stretching far and wide, reaching from Elkstone to Weaver, passing through Blore and Okeover, the invaders reached Ashbourne on the 3rd and 4th, and in a few hours afterwards entered Derby.

The scouting of the Duke's army was inferior to that of the Highlanders. A royalist messenger, Joshua Ball, sent to the army at Stone, was waylaid and made drunk, and the remarkable inactivity of the Duke may perhaps be due to the unreliability of his information. His strategic movement of seven miles to Stafford, occuping two days, is otherwise inexplicable.*

During the time of the Duke's stay at Stone and Stafford, the Scotch officers in Council at Derby had realised that a return to Scotland was desirable, and, though opposed by the Chevalier, the whole force left for Ashbourne on Friday, the 6th, and on Saturday again reached Leek with the artillery. After a brief rest they proceeded the following day, Sunday, towards Manchester.†

Whilst the Chevalier's forces were speeding north on the 6th, the Duke was marching to Lichfield, which city he reached at night.‡ The next morning (Saturday) he proceeded to Meriden Heath, between Coleshill and Coventry, and there encamped, the horse having advanced to Coventry, where the men received flannel waistcoats from the Quakers of the city.

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* The narrative of James Ray (a military volunteer, who had followed the Highlanders from the north, and intercepted their letters sent by post to Scotland) says, he got to Stafford at four in the morning. The town was very full, but he got his horses taken care of at the Cross Keys. Though much fatigued by his journey, the cold, and want of sleep, he had no opportunity to get to bed; but, with the help of some good old beer and a couple of stewed rabbits, he was refreshed, and went to the Duke and repeated the contents of the Highlanders' letters, he had captured. The streets of Stafford he describes as clean and well paved. He does not give the Duke's quarters. It is probable, however, that he stayed at the High House, in Greengate Street, the old mansion, which a century before Charles I. and Prince Rupert made their headquarters, and which, besides its historic associations, has the reputation of being one of the finest specimens of its class existing.

† A number of local traditions of this famous retreat are extant. It is told that the Joliffes—the Leek wool merchants—were greatly enriched by claiming a small barrel, which long lay unowned in the market place, and which proved to be filled with specie of the Scotch army. The drummer's knob, on the Cloud range, takes its name traditionally from a Scotch drummer being there shot from a great distance; whilst the secluded glen at Swythamley, known as Meal Ark Clough, is reputed to have secreted all the cattle of the district from the marauding of the Highlanders. The tradition that the Chevalier slept one night at the "Royal Cottage," near Back Forest, must also apply to this period, whilst the relics preserved at Swythamley, and shown in the illustration, page 81, are weapons unquestionably discarded in the retreat.

‡ The quarters of the Duke of Cumberland, at Lichfield, were at the Friary, the house of Mr. Michael Rawlins, on the site of the ancient Franciscan monastay.

News of the Chevalier's retreat now reached the Duke, and the following morning (Sunday) his army started north in full pursuit. By Monday night he reached Cheadle and Shelton, and on Tuesday, by way of the Churnet Valley and Leek, his advanced forces arrived at Macclesfield.

MEAL ARK CLOUGH.

It was not, however, until the 19th at Clifton, near Penrith, that the rear of the Highland forces, under Lord Murray, having charge of the artillery, and delayed by heavy roads, was overtaken, and then the pursuers received a serious rebuff. At Carlisle, the Duke gave up the pursuit, and laid siege to the castle. When this stronghold surrendered on the 30th, the Duke left for London, whilst the Chevalier reached Glasgow on Christmas day.

That the famous retreat of the Highlanders was effected in good order is proved by their carrying off their guns, notwithstanding the knowledge that the army of General Wade was marching against them from the north. The four months' marching was orderly and free from rapine and violence, and the Chevalier for his personal bravery and restraint, his unstained honour, clemency, and mercy, deservedly gained the highest praise.

On the other hand, the defending forces were alternately swayed by panic, passion, or revenge, and to such a length indeed was the vindictive retaliation and brutal cruelty of the Duke of Cumberland carried, that he was ever after known as the "Butcher."

The Highlanders held out until the 16th April, when the battle of Culloden finally ended this most singular attempt to recover the crown for the ancient line of the Stuarts. After months of fugitive wandering, Charles Edward escaped from the Scottish coast on the 20th September, and speedily passed into oblivion.

CHEADLE.

Samuel Johnson and his Home.

CHIEF among the many illustrious men to whom the county of Stafford has given birth, must be reckoned the brightest ornament of the eighteenth century, "the Hero as Man of Letters," who in his own age enjoyed the reputation of a classic, Samuel Johnson. His father, Michael Johnson, who was born in 1655, and apprenticed at Leek, settled as a bookseller at Lichfield, having also shops (or perhaps stalls only) at Uttoxeter and Ashby-de-la-Zouch,* and he also, on market days, travelled to Birmingham, and other towns within the radius of a few hours' journey from Lichfield. He was a man of some literary accomplishments (spoken of as "the learned Lichfield librarian,") and was highly respected by his neighbours. In Birmingham, where his brother Andrew was a bookseller, as early as 1702, he probably became acquainted with his future wife, Sarah Ford, daughter of Cornelius Ford, of King's Norton, yeoman, and they were married at Packwood Church. As a bookseller he prospered, and was made a magistrate, and, during the year in which Samuel Johnson was born, held the office of Sheriff of the City. His wife was a woman of good sense and high moral character. They married comparatively late in life, and had only two sons, Samuel and Nathaniel, and the latter only lived to the age of twenty-five.

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* One of the medical works of Sir John Floyer, of Lichfield, was "Printed for Michael Johnson, Bookseller, and are to be sold *at his shops at Litchfield and Uttoxeter, in Staffordshire, and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, in Leicestershire*, 1687."

Samuel Johnson was born in the fine old-fashioned house at the corner of the Market Square in Lichfield, on the 7th September, 1709, and baptised on the day of his birth at St. Mary's Church, which stands opposite his birthplace. From early youth he was greatly afflicted, and, in accordance with the superstition of the time, was taken to London to be "touched" by the royal hands of Queen Anne, of whom in after life, he had "a sort of solemn recollection," as of "a lady in diamonds and a long black hood." But the charm did not work—some said the virtue of the royal touch had died with the last Stuart King—and poor Johnson carried through life a disfigured countenance, and was, beside, parcel-blind, as the result of his dire disorder.

T. Grundy, *Lichfield.*

BIRTHPLACE OF DR. JOHNSON.

Several stories attest the precocity of the future genius in his early youth. When he was only three years old he is said to have taken a lively interest in that firebrand of the church militant, Dr. Sacheverell, and to have prevailed upon his father to take him to the Cathedral to hear the non-juring doctor preach. The figure of the baby-partisan, perched on his father's shoulders, in the Cathedral, listening to Sacheverell, has been perpetuated in a sculptured panel on the pedestal of the Lichfield statue of Johnson. His schooldays were passed at the Grammar School of Lichfield, under John Hunter,* where he easily distanced all his fellows in learning, but took no part in their boyish sports, prefering rather to sit in a corner reading the old romances of chivalry, or any other book he could lay his

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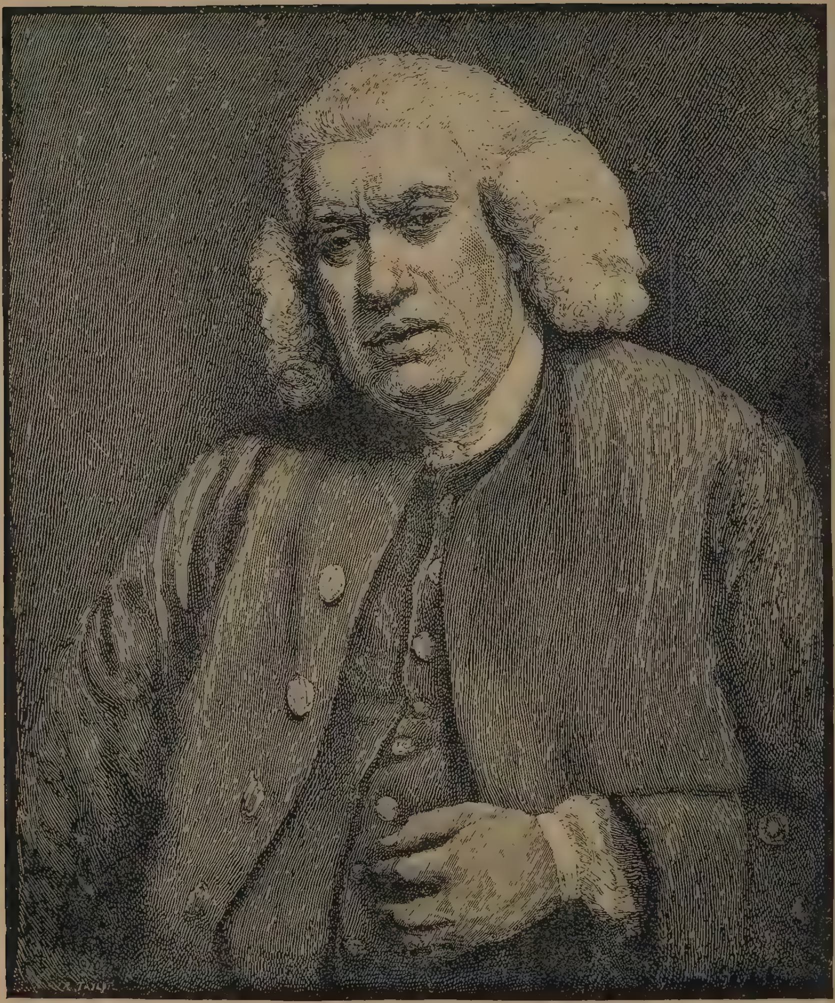
* John Hunter, M.A., originally of Birmingham, was Master of Solihull School, from 1694 to 1704. In 1724 he married Lucy Porter, sister of Henry Porter, the Birmingham Mercer, whose widow Johnson afterwards married. Hunter's daughter by his first wife was mother of Anna Seward.



DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

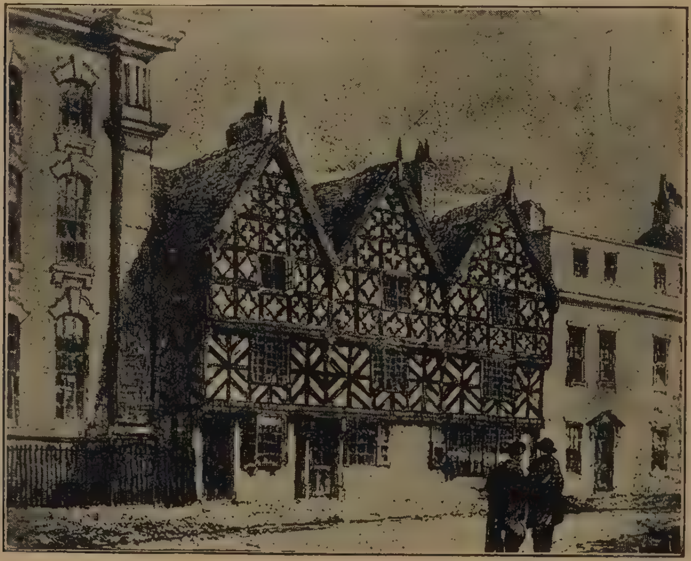
(*From the portrait, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, in the National Gallery.*)

hands on. His aptness for learning made him somewhat of a favourite among his companions, as he was thereby often enabled to help them in their lessons, while they, in return, ministered to his slothful, indolent habit by bearing him on their shoulders to and from the school.

At the age of fifteen he was forbidden, it is said, to continue his studies at the Grammar School, by his schoolmaster, in consequence of his having addressed some verses to the schoolmaster's niece, Miss Lucy Porter. He therefore removed to the Grammar School at Stourbridge, where he remained only about a year; after which he spent two years at home in a somewhat aimless fashion. Probably during these two years he accompanied his father to the distant market towns on many occasions, sometimes, perhaps, taking his father's place at the stall. There were many small market towns within a radius of fifteen or sixteen miles of Lichfield, at which it would be profitable to set up a bookstall occasionally, while the places previously named would each have to be visited at least once a week. Hence it would be convenient to Michael Johnson to send his son, —now a well-grown youth, over the average size, and full of curious book-knowledge—in his place to some of the lesser markets. We know, at any rate, that he once refused to take his father's place at Uttoxeter market—for which act he did penance in later days. He also learned something of the art of binding books, and seems to have been designated to follow his father's calling.

During these years of Johnson's residence at home his father was engaged in a new branch of business—that of making parchment—in which he not only lost most of the money he had made by bookselling, but also brought down upon himself a prosecution for some offence against the Excise Laws (parchment being an exciseable article); and it was doubtless this trouble which implanted in the mind of young Johnson that bitterness against the Excise which he manifested both in his great Dictionary and in his *Idler* Essays.

Samuel Johnson, however, in spite of his father's reduced circumstances, managed to escape from the drudgery of the book shop to the more congenial atmosphere of the university—mainly, it is said, through the assistance of a fellow-student, Andrew Corbet, who was in turn helped by Johnson in his studies. Throughout the three years which he spent at Pembroke College, Oxford, however, he was hampered by poverty, and he left without a degree. Meanwhile his father had fallen into a state of insolvency, and died soon after his son's return from Oxford, and thus Johnson was thrown upon his own resources. He sought and obtained the post of usher at Market Bosworth, but left it very soon, finding the dull routine irksome to him. From thence, therefore, he tramped to Birmingham, to stay for a time with his old friend and schoolfellow Hector (who had set up as a surgeon in Birmingham), and there spent some months in the hope that in some way he might find a means of livelihood. Here he occupied his leisure by translating Father Lobo's Voyage to Abyssinia, which was printed in Birmingham in 1735, and thus he began his literary career. While here,



ANCIENT HOUSE IN BORE STREET, LICHFIELD.

too, he made the acquaintance of the widow of Henry Porter, whom he married a few months later, and took a large house at Edial, near Lichfield, and set up a private academy, where "young children" might be "boarded and taught the Latin and Greek by Samuel Johnson." Only two pupils, however, were attracted by the young usher's advertisement in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, but both, in a way, were notable, one of them being the future ornament of the British stage, David Garrick, and the other, the son of Mr. Offley of Wichnor Park—the ancient manor of the Somervilles, which was held by the "flitch of bacon" tenure referred to in an earlier chapter.

The attempt to establish a school proving a failure, Johnson resolved to seek his fortune in London. He had already been in communication with Mr. Edward Cave, of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and he again sought an entrance to the pages of the famous monthly, and at the same time set about writing a tragedy entitled *Irene*. The former enterprise was more successful than the latter, for while the tragedy was not acted till 1749, his contributions to the *Gentleman's Magazine* became his principal source of employment and support for some time to come.

It is no purpose of this brief sketch to follow Johnson through the vicissitudes of his literary career, but rather to note his relation to the county of Stafford. On his journey to London he had for his companion his quondam pupil, Davy Garrick; and Johnson used to say afterwards that he had journeyed thither with twopence-halfpenny in his pocket, while his companion had only three-halfpence. He shortly afterwards returned to Lichfield to fetch his wife, and thereafter settled in London. When he next visited Lichfield, he had become the foremost man of letters of his time; had published his great dictionary, his essays, and most of his writings, and had received the degree of M.A. from Oxford, and of LL.D. from Dublin. He found the streets much narrower and shorter than he had thought when he left them, and they were inhabited by a new race of people; his old play-fellows having grown old, and many of them had, like his mother and his wife, gone to swell the great majority. This was in 1762, and he again visited Lichfield and spent three months there in 1765, about the time his edition of the works of Shakespeare was published. By this time he was in the enjoyment of a pension of £300, granted to him by King George III. (with whom he had had an interview, as described by Boswell) through the influence of Lord Bute.

In 1771, we find him again in Staffordshire. At Lichfield, he found that the portrait of him by Sir Joshua Reynolds (in the possession of Miss Lucy Porter, his step-daughter) was "much visited and much admired." This trip was his only "summer wandering" this year, as he was engaged in "a very great work," the revision of the Dictionary. Next year he purposed to go to Scotland.

It was not until 1776 that he again visited Lichfield, and on this visit he was accompanied by Boswell. They stayed on the way in Birmingham at the house of Hector, in the Square, and Boswell visited the famous Soho works, regretting that Johnson could not accompany him. "It was a scene," he said, "which I should have been glad to contemplate by his light. The vastness of the machinery would have 'matched his mighty mind.'" But vast machinery was not to Johnson's taste. When they came in sight of the lamps of Lichfield—the little country town, whose narrow streets had become contracted in his imagination—he said, "now we are getting out of a state of death." Here there was no vast machinery; to Boswell the inhabitants seemed "an idle set of people." "Sir," said Johnson, "we are a city of philosophers; we work with our heads, and make the boobies of Birmingham work for us with their hands."

The society of the little country town at that time had some attractions even for one accustomed to the gaieties of the metropolis. Thomas Day, the eccentric genius who wrote "Sandford and Merton," Richard Lovell Edgeworth, the famous Dr. Erasmus Darwin, Anna Seward ("the Swan of Lichfield") and others of note, all lived in the immediate neighbourhood of Lichfield at that time. Peter Garrick, too, the brother of the more famous David, was among the circle of Johnson's friends, while his step-daughter, Lucy Porter, had ever a warm welcome for him. Her brother, a captain in the navy, had died, leaving her a fortune of ten thousand pounds.

About a third of this amount she had expended in building a stately house, and making a handsome garden, in an elevated situation in Lichfield. Thereafter she occupied a good position in the society of the little city, and at her house Johnson found a home befitting his position, whenever he visited his native city.

It must have been on this occasion that he visited Uttoxeter for the purpose of doing penance for his disobedience of many years ago. Warner, in his *Tour through the Northern Counties*, thus recounts this remarkable incident :

> "During the last visit* which the Doctor made to Lichfield, the friends with whom he was staying missed him one morning at the breakfast table. On inquiring after him of the servants, they understood he had set off from Lichfield at a very early hour, without mentioning to any of the family whither he was going. The day passed without the return of the illustrious guest, when, just before the supper-hour, the door opened and the Doctor stalked into the room. A solemn silence of a few moments ensued, nobody daring to inquire the cause of his absence, which was at length relieved by Johnson addressing the lady of the house in the following manner : 'Madam, I beg your pardon for the abruptness of my departure from your house this morning, but I was constrained to it by my conscience. Fifty years ago, Madam, on this day, I committed a breach of filial piety which has ever since lain heavy on my mind, and has not till this day been expiated. My father, you recollect, was a bookseller, and had long been in the habit of attending Uttoxeter market, and opening a stall for the sale of his books during that day. Confined to his bed by indisposition, he requested me, this time fifty years ago, to visit the market and attend the stall in his place. But, Madam, my pride prevented me from doing my duty, and I gave my father a refusal. To do away with the sin of this disobedience, I this day went in a postchaise to Uttoxeter, and going into the market at the time of high business, uncovered my head, and stood with it bare an hour before the stall which my father had formerly used, exposed to the sneers of the standers-by, and the inclemency of the weather ; a penance by which I trust I have propitiated Heaven for this only instance, I believe, of contumacy toward my father.'"

Johnson was again in Staffordshire in 1777, when on one of his visits to Dr. Taylor, at Ashbourne, he, with Boswell, visited Ilam Hall and Park, formerly the home of the Congreve family, where one of the most famous members of that family, the dramatist of that name, wrote his "Mourning Bride," and other comedies. The fine amphitheatre of hills, covered with verdure, and the picturesque walks constructed along the side

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* This could not be correct. Johnson again visited Lichfield in 1784, and as he himself says the penance took place *fifty years* after the act of disobedience, it could not have been later than 1776 or 1777. Michael Johnson had been dead fifty-four years at the time of Dr. Johnson's last visit to Lichfield.

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of a rocky steep, won the admiration of Boswell; and the curiosity of both was aroused by the sight of "two rivers bursting near each other from the rock, after having run for many miles underground."* Johnson was incredulous as to the subterranean course of the rivers, "though," says Boswell, "we had the attestation of the gardener, who said he had put in corks, where the river *Manyfold* sinks into the ground, and had caught them in a net, placed before one of the openings where the water bursts out."

A. J. Leeson.

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL (INTERIOR.)

Being on so many occasions within a few miles of the beauties of Dove Dale (during his visits to Dr. Taylor), it is somewhat surprising to find no mention of this picturesque valley in the Life of Johnson; yet there can be little doubt that he must have explored it on one of his visits to this neighbourhood. Having conquered the natural indolence of his disposition so far as to make a tour into the Hebrides, it would be strange if he did not make the slight effort to visit this famous locality in his native county.

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* The Hamps and Manifold.

Dr. Johnson visited Lichfield for the last time in 1784. He was in failing health, and might well have remained in the city which he apostrophised with affection in his Dictionary, and there ended his days surrounded by loving friends. But the greater fascination of London drew him away after a short visit, and calling on his friend Hector, in Birmingham, for the last time, he returned to the Metropolis. In December he wrote to Mr. Green, an apothecary, of Lichfield, enclosing inscriptions for the tombs of his parents and his long dead brother, Nathaniel, to be placed "in the middle aisle of St. Michael's Church," having previously "laid a stone over Tetty [his wife] in the chapel of Bromley, in Kent." On the 13th of the same month he died, and was buried among the mighty dead in Poet's Corner. A bust was erected to his memory in Lichfield Cathedral by his friends, and in later years a statue was erected in the little Market Place, opposite the house in which he was born. The pedestal was adorned with bas-reliefs, representing several notable events in his life, the most notable being that of his penance in Uttoxeter Market Place. But his most enduring monument is the great biography written by his friend and companion, James Boswell. In this he is made to live and speak again to every age.

The Early Potters.

THE waters of the river Trent flow through no more remarkable district than where its upper reaches and its tributaries pass the towns, villages, and hamlets which combine to make the Potteries. Here for untold ages has the potter toiled. The enduring interest of the potter's work surpasses that of all others. By it history is written—alike in the broken shards buried but a few centuries and in the sepulchral urns and vessels, moulded by the hand of the Celt and burnt in the wood coal fires of 2000 years ago—the story of man's condition, his rudeness or skill, his barbarism or refinement, is told.

The mist of early ages enshrouds alike the early ironworker and the primeval potter; yet in the case of the latter it is not impenetrable. Survivals of the undoubted work of the ancient British potter have been recovered at Stone, Trentham, Shelton, Yoxall, Uttoxeter, Wetton, and other districts. Cinerary urns, containing the ashes and burnt bones of the dead, smaller vessels for drinking purposes, food vessels, and incense cups, these treasurable relics exhibit in form and ornamentation a progressive tendency in the potter's art.

Although the Engle and Saxon invaders were slow in adopting potter's ware for domestic use, yet urns for sepulchral purposes, somewhat ruder and varying in ornamentation from the specimens of earlier workers, were produced, and eventually the potter found a more general demand for his ware.

It is impossible to decide how far the devastating effect of Norman rule destroyed the industry of the Staffordshire clay districts, but it is certain that for centuries the product was confined to the ruder kinds of domestic ware, and these were produced in the neighbourhood of Wednesbury and elsewhere as well as in the pottery district around Burslem; whilst the production of tiles was carried on at Great Saredon, near Wolverhampton, and in other parts of Staffordshire and its border-land.

JOSIAH WEDGWOOD.

It is of more than passing interest to know upon good evidence that, from the earliest period of pot making, Burslem was known to the Romans. It lay near the city of Chesterton and adjacent to the then great Roman road, the Rykeneldway or Via Devana. But more than this the Rykeneld had undoubtedly been a British trackway, so that Burslem has a fair title to a British or Celtic origin.

Another claim to great antiquity lies in its name, Bur-wardes-lyme, a name derived like Chesterton, Newcastle, Audlem, Whitmore, Madeley, and many other places, with the affix—under-lyme, from its lying near or under the great dividing wood limit, boundary, or mark of the early races. The claim, therefore, of Burslem to be the mother town of the Potteries is clear and unassailable.

Passing from medieval to modern times, Burslem is found most prominent in the earliest written evidence of pot making. Thus among the earliest domestic and other pottery the Uttoxeter butter pot is shown by Plot to be Burslem ware, and, as the well-known Church accounts of Uttoxeter record the use of these pots in 1644, they may fairly be assumed to have been made long before.*

Dr. Plot's observations were written about 1677. Soon afterwards a series of improved processes were originated which speedily brought the pottery district of Burslem into prominence. Some of these processes are not without their romance. About 1680, one Palmer, a potter, acquired the art of salt glazing from the accidental boiling over of a pot of salt liquor, in the neighbouring village of Bagnall. Previous to 1680, the gloss was obtained by calcined lead powdered and sprinkled before firing. The earliest butter pots discovered, which weighed about six pounds, were unglazed. Pots of later date were partially glazed by powdered lead ore, not calcined. After 1680, salt was introduced largely into all glazing processes.

About 1688, two Dutchmen, brothers, and of good lineage, John Philip and David Elers, found their way to Burslem. Like all Dutchmen they knew what they wanted, and between Burslem and the ancient city of Chesterton, they were successful in their search for a vein of red clay of superior quality. From their kilns were produced wares comparable with the red porcelain of the East, and worthy precursors of the wares of Josiah Wedgwood. Their processes, long kept secret, were ultimately divulged. Two potters, Astbury and Twyford, both acquired them. Astbury is credited with having foisted himself upon the brothers as an idiot, the species of workmen they preferred.

Subsequently this Astbury became a prosperous potter at Shelton. In one of his business journeys to London, the ostler of a Dunstable inn burnt some flint to apply in a powdered state to the eyes of Astbury's horse. Struck with some remarkable results of the burning and powdering, he commenced experiments in flint glazing. He was completely successful, and realised a handsome fortune. His son, Samuel, married an aunt of Josiah Wedgwood, the Prince of Potters.

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*Dr. Plot's well-known and interesting paragraph states that vast quantities of butter and cheese were sold at Uttoxeter Mercat to the London dealers:—"The butter they buy by the *Pot*, of a long cylindrical form, made at *Burslem*, in this county." The Churchwardens' Accounts record that "On the 7th May, 1644, 8 c. 2 q. 7 lbs. of cheese and five pots of butter were sent to the garrison at Tutbury Castle." In 1661, an Act of Parliament was passed to regulate the size, thickness, and quality of the butter pots, for the prevention of frauds which had arisen, the butter being always sold by the pot and not by weight.

Among the earliest potters whose names have been preserved, were Thomas Toft, William Taylor, William Sans, Ralph Toft, and Thomas Wedgwood. The last named was probably an apprentice between 1630-40. He belonged to a family of potters. The Wedgwood family was not only the most important in Burslem, but of the longest standing, its connection with the town extending from a very rude period of its history until its fame became world wide.*

Thomas Wedgwood, who died in 1679, was succeeded in his pottery by his son Thomas, and he, again, by another Thomas, the father of Josiah, the greatest of the Wedgwoods, the most famous of English potters, during whose life the trade of the district became greatly changed.

We are told by Plot that when the pots were burnt they were drawn for sale chiefly by poor cratemen, who carried them on their backs all over the country. The itinerant vending of pottery has remained an element of the trade for ages;† but the artistic productions of Josiah Wedgwood speedily rivalled the best wares of the Kingdom, and the trade of the Potteries was no longer dependent on the cratemen. The demand became world-wide; and what Matthew Boulton afterwards was to Soho and Birmingham Josiah Wedgwood was to the Potteries.

Josiah Wedgwood had the rare insight which led him to see that what had been accomplished in the production of artistic pottery abroad might also be accomplished here, by the use of best materials and the employment of men of taste as designers. He therefore secured the assistance of the foremost classic artist of his time, John Flaxman, as well as other skilled designers, and spared no pains in seeking for suitable clays for use in the production of his ware.* As a result, his artistic productions—as he himself said—"only wanted time and scarcity to make them worth anything," and time has proved the truth of the remark. Articles which when produced cost only a few pence or shillings, are now the treasured possessions of the

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* Burslem, says Jewitt, was then a small, unassuming, struggling little place, with the houses and pot works, few in number, scattered about its gardens and by its lane sides. Where the Town Hall now stands was the May-pole. In every direction were the pits which had yielded the clay, and the shard rucks, the accumulated heaps of broken pottery and wastrels. Ray, in his History of the Rebellion of 1745, speaking of Newcastle near Chesterton-under-Lyme, says:—"The town is surrounded with coal pits, and about three miles from it is a manufacture of earthenware which imitates brown china, and make curious Black Tea Pots resembling Japan, being neatly figured and gilt.

† Thomas Holcroft, the playwright and poet, when a boy, assisted his father as a pottery crateman. He says his father was a trafficker in whatever would bring gain. The one thing which fixed his attention longer than any other and which he found most lucrative, was to fetch pottery from the neighbourhood of Burslem, and to hawk it all through the North of England. In order to employ his asses, he also occasionally sent his lad to Cannock to get an ass load of coals at the pits, and drive over the heath to find a customer for them at Rugeley. On one occasion, young Holcroft, after passing through the heavy clay ruts and deep roads, had his ass and cart blown over in a gale of wind, on the summit of a hill. In telling this story, Holcroft grows pathetic over his grief and utter despair, but proceeds: The coal pits were situated on the extremity of an old forest, inhabited by large quantities of red deer. At these I always stopped to look; but what inspired and delighted me most of all was the noble stag, for to him the deer appeared insignificant. He I often saw bounding along, eyeing objects without fear, and making prodigious leaps over obstacles that opposed his passage.—*Thomas Holcroft's Memoirs.*

MEDALLION FROM A DESIGN BY JOHN FLAXMAN.
(*Now in the possession of Sir Richard Tangye.*)

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* One notable example of this is the beautiful medallion here engraved, which was made from a special clay brought by Sir Joseph Banks from Sydney, and the medallion itself designed by Flaxman. When Sir Richard Tangye, the present owner of the medallion, was in Sydney some years ago, he found there a clay of the same nature as that used in the medallion.

virtuosi or of the great museums. "Could Wedgwood rise again," says his biographer, Miss Eliza Meteyard, "he would stand amazed at the veneration and regard which cleaves to his name and his productions. Men of the highest intellectual gifts collect the latter; and we are beginning to see that we may resort to his art for the expression of sentiments at once appreciative and reverent."

The traditions of the historic pottery of Etruria are being carried on in many directions to-day. What he dimly foresaw in the future for terra-cotta, for instance, has been largely realised by the great potters of our time, and results which the low artistic culture of Wedgwood's time did not allow him to realise are now being accomplished in this material, while the Staffordshire potteries still hold a high position as the home of artistic productions in fictile wares. The Staffordshire potters of to-day, indeed, are reaping the harvest of a widespread appreciation of artistic pottery, which was created in the first instance by the productions of Josiah Wedgwood.

SOHO PARK.

A Captain of Industry.

ON the Staffordshire side of Birmingham, nearly two miles distant from that town, there stretched an expanse of heathy moorland, used a century and a half ago as a rabbit warren, and on which almost the only building then standing was a warrener's hut. At the same time there was on Snow Hill in Birmingham a firm of "toy-makers," father and son, both bearing the name of Matthew Boulton*—the elder a native of Lichfield, whose enterprise in the making of "toys," so called, that is, of trinkets, buckles, buttons, and other fancy small wares, had already done something to remove the stigma attaching to "Brummagem" wares.

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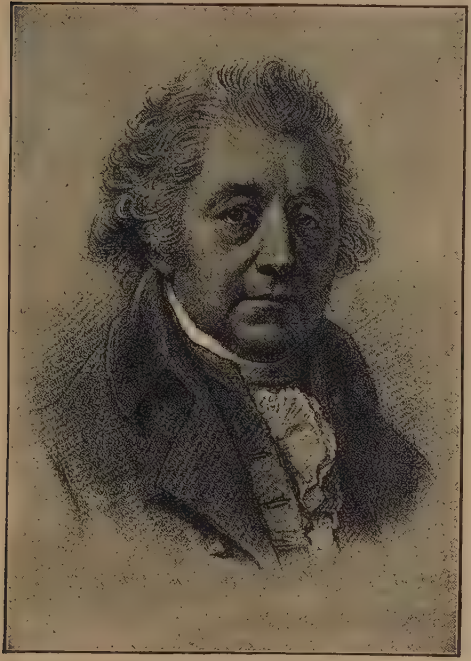
* The younger Matthew was born 1728, and was educated in the school of St. John's, Deritend, by the Rev. John Hausted. In the Saint Philip's Church Register are the following entries:—1724, March 31: *Baptism*, Matthew, son of Matthew Bolton. 1726, March 4: *Burial*, Matthew, son of Matthew Bolton. 1728, September 18: *Baptism*, Matthew son of Matthew Boulton.

In 1759 the elder Boulton died, and in the following year young Matthew Boulton married Anne, the daughter of Luke Robinson, Esq., of Lichfield, and received with her a dowry of £28,000. Thus equipped, he cast about for a site for a larger factory than that in which he and his father had worked, intending to extend his business and develop it into a great undertaking. His choice fell on the aforementioned heath, and here he set up the Soho Factory, wherein he hoped to found, as it were, "a great industrial college, which should train a race of highly-skilled workmen, and make the manufactures of Soho and the fame of Matthew Boulton honoured the world over."* For he was no longer content to go on making mere trinkets and buttons; he was ambitious to produce works as artistic in metal as Josiah Wedgwood had begun to make in pottery. With this view he visited the British Museum and the homes of the most celebrated *virtuosi* in England, borrowing or copying fine examples of metal work belonging to the Queen and many noblemen of taste, and examining such rare collections as that of Horace Walpole, at Strawberry Hill. He also bought vases, statuary, and other choice works of art from Italy, in his eagerness to have the most artistic models for his workmanship.



MATTHEW BOULTON.

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* S. Timmins on "Matthew Boulton,"

In all this he was doubtless inspired by the example of the great Staffordshire potter—indeed, he even wished to become a potter himself—and no work which he was able to do at this time pleased him better than the mounting in metal of some of Wedgwood's beautiful productions.

Thus, proceeding from one achievement to another — making curious mechanical and astronomical clocks to adorn the court of the Russian Empress, employing Flaxman and other artists of repute to make designs for him, gathering around him a large band of skilled workers in metal, enamel, glass, stones, and other materials, and having "almost every machine that was applicable to the arts,"—Matthew Boulton succeeded in making the Soho Factory famous, and attracted to Handsworth Heath distinguished visitors from all countries. But his great ambition was fettered by the lack of some more powerful motor, whereby the great machinery might be driven to better purpose; his chief motive power up to this time had been furnished from an adjoining pool, and in dry weather he had been compelled to supplement this by horse power. His receptive mind—willing to consider even the most (apparently) utopian schemes—naturally, therefore, turned towards the experiments which James Watt had been making, in far-off Greenock, and through the kind offices of two friends Boulton and Watt were brought together—the one, a fearless, enterprising captain of industry, ready to adventure his all in the pursuit of his purposes, the other a diffident, timid genius, whose great schemes could never have been brought to a practical issue without the encouragement and co-operation of such a one as Boulton. That the great manufacturer had as much to offer Watt as the latter had to bring was unquestionable, and it was not to be wondered at that the Scottish inventor speedily found it to his advantage to become allied with Boulton, and thereupon came and established himself with his partner at Handsworth. With the help of the skilled workmen of the Soho factory the steam engine soon assumed a practical shape, and Boulton and Watt had now not only power enough to drive all the machinery in the great factory, but they also had power to sell to all who wished to buy.

The fame of the Soho factory attracted to it skilful and ingenious workmen—and men who were more than mere workmen, like William Murdock, the shrewd Scotch engineer, who, although occupying only the position of a servant to the firm, speedily proved himself a worthy "right-hand man" to the two partners; and Francis Eginton, the genius who re-discovered

SOHO FACTORY.
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the art of stained glass, and astonished the *cognocenti* by his "sun pictures" from the designs of Reynolds, West, Loutherberg, and other artists of repute. Wedgwood, among others, was a willing purchaser of these curious productions, and in many ways Eginton proved himself a valuable ally of Boulton and Watt.

The attraction which this busy hive of workers in curious arts had for men of ability led to the formation of a sort of literary and scientific club, which met at the houses of various members, but most frequently at the house of Matthew Boulton, which he was proud to call *l'hotel d'amité sur Handsworth Heath.* As many of the members lived at remote distances from the place of meeting, and as the roads and lanes of Staffordshire were without lamps or other artificial illumination, a full moon was a most important factor in determining the date of meetings, hence the club was dubbed the "Lunar Society." To its meetings many men of note in the neighbourhood were attracted. Dr. Erasmus Darwin, Thomas Day, and Richard Lovel Edgeworth came from Lichfield, Samuel Galton, the banker and chemist, from Great Barr, and Joseph Priestley, the minister of the Birmingham New Meeting who had achieved fame in the scientific world by his researches on the nature of gases, came from Fair Hill. Josiah Wedgwood, too, was occasionlly drawn from his engrossing pursuits at his famous potteries to join in the social intercourse of this notable society, and men of wide renown, like Sir Joseph Banks, Sir William Herschel, Smeaton, and Dr. Samuel Parr were occasional visitors. Among the rest James Watt's brilliant but short-lived son Gregory, Dr. Small, James Keir, and other local men of note joined in the deliberations and social amenities of the famous Soho circle.

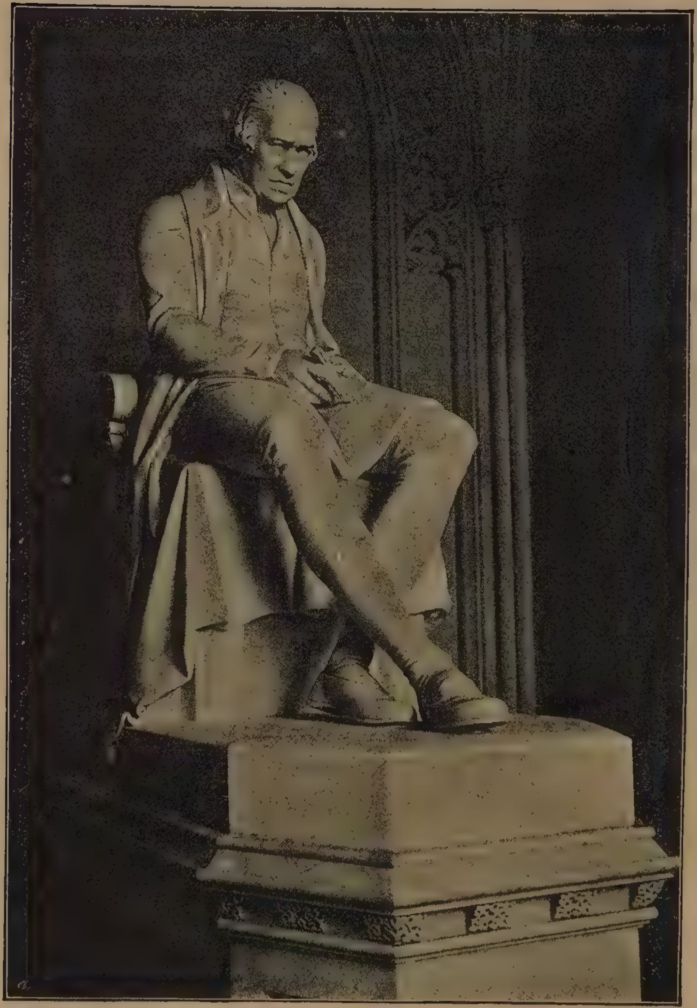
These social enjoyments, however, were but as occasional breaks in the severe strain and anxious worry which beset the firm of Boulton and Watt after the launching of the new branch of manufacture for the production of steam engines. Spies dogged the gates of Soho, and sought to worm out the secrets of the inventors. One of these even managed to pick up from the workmen in the kitchen of the "Waggon and Horses" (a roadside inn near Soho), Watt's design for the rotary crank, and succeeded in anticipating the inventor in getting a patent for it. Workmen who had been trained in the Soho factory were enticed away by would-be rivals, and frequent troubles arose from the imperfect knowledge of those who had to work the engines which were sent out from Soho. But with so efficient a helper as Murdock—who is described as "flying from mine to mine" in Cornwall to put to rights engines which had been thrown out of gear by those who worked them—the latter trouble was greatly minimized.

Moreover, Boulton and Watt were both engaged on new enterprises. The former was desirous of applying his steam power to the coining of money, and was ambitious to set up a mint at Soho, from whence he should issue a copper coinage worthy of the nation. "Of all the mechanical subjects I ever entered upon," he writes, "there is none in which I ever engaged with so much ardour as that of bringing to perfection the art of coinage in the reign of George III., as well as of checking the injurious and fatal crime of counterfeiting." Orders soon came in for copper coin from the East India Company, and subsequently from the French Republic, but it was not until 1797 that he was commissioned to execute a copper coinage for Great Britain. He ultimately, however, had the satisfaction, not only of making a new copper coinage, but also of furnishing a new mint on Tower Hill with the necessary machinery of the improved type which he had designed.

Meanwhile, Watt was busily engaged on a new invention for copying letters, by a process practically the same as the copying press now in use. He met with much opposition at first, both from bankers and members of Parliament, who were fearful lest it should lend itself to fraud. Ultimately, however, their fears were allayed, and the copying press won its way into public favour.

William Murdock, too, had his pet hobbies on hand, and was frightening the Cornish folk with his model locomotive, which breathed forth fire and smoke as it traversed the less frequented lanes, and led some worthy people to suspect that Watt's engineer had dealings with the evil one. A more practical hobby of his was that of gas lighting, which he brought to such perfection that at length the Soho firm were able to contract for the setting up of gas-manufacturing plant, and to send forth from the factory on Handsworth Heath a light which was destined ultimately to illumine the darkness of every town in the kingdom.

And thus with one important invention after another coming forth from the Soho factory, Boulton and Watt not only attained the foremost position among manufacturers, but also amassed considerable fortune, so that the partners were enabled, at the close of the century, to retire from active participation in the firm. Boulton, however, continued to take some part in its direction, feeling that "he must either rub or rust," and although Watt retired to the pleasant groves of Heathfield, he still pursued his hobbies, in a garret in Heathfield House which has become classic. When he died, in 1819—just ten years after his famous partner had been borne to



STATUE OF JAMES WATT (BY CHANTREY) IN HANDSWORTH CHURCH.

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the grave by the workmen to whom he had been a veritable "captain of industry"—this workshop was allowed to remain exactly as its master had left it, and in that condition it remains to-day; a more fitting memorial of the man who gave to the world a new power than even the noble statue by Chantrey which marks his last resting-place in Handsworth Church.

While the tools remain in the garret at Heathfield just as Watt left them, the Soho factory has passed into oblivion. Not a stone remains of the great workshop where Boulton and Watt, Murdock, and Eginton laboured to perfect their inventions; but the dust of these fellow-workers in the cause of progress lies mingled in the little chapel attached to Handsworth Church, whose walls are inscribed with the names and achievements of master and servant alike.

Sons of the Shire.

IN chronicling the exploits of Staffordshire men of old, the earls and knights of Saxon or Norman age, the Crusaders, the mail-clad partisans of Stephen or Maud, of Richard or Bolingbroke, of York or Lancaster, of King or Commons, the list of those who achieved honour in arms is not exhausted. The scroll of fame has yet other names whose life's story, writ in modern times, deservedly ranks with those of older warriors by sea or by land. Anson, Jervis, Gardner, Paget, and Parker are but successors to the Devereuxs, Levesons, Dudleys, Shirleys, Stanleys, Verduns, Ferrers, Bassets, Staffords, Meschines, and a host of fighting men, reaching far back until lost in the mist of time.

The Staffordshire family of Anson, first of Dunston and then of Shugborough, has a long connection with the shire. The voluminous records of civil war times are full of entries of the pains and penalties imposed upon the Ansons for their loyalty. Shugborough Hall, with its park of surpassing natural beauty, lying in the vale of the Trent, was purchased by William Anson, a lawyer of eminence of the time of James I., and his grandson William held it in 1697, when his younger son, George, the future admiral, was born.

At the age of nineteen George Anson was sent to the Baltic, and at twenty-five became a captain. After a career of great valour, he, in 1739, took the command of a small fleet against the Spaniards, and for brilliant services was rewarded, in 1744, by promotion to the rank of rear-admiral, and subsequently vice-admiral of the Blue, with a peerage. As Lord Anson, he, 1761, achieved his highest dignity, that of Commander-in-chief of the British Navy. He died the following year, at the age of sixty-five, after an active service (probably unexcelled in naval history) of forty-six years.

J. Garland, *Cannock.*

SHUGBOROUGH BRIDGE.

Whilst Anson was making his famous voyage round the world, another future British admiral, Alan Gardner, was born at Uttoxeter, a few miles from Shugborough, a town which has produced many distinguished men. He was the fourth son of Lieutenant-colonel Gardner, and was born 12th April, 1742. He entered the navy at fourteen, and after five years' hard fighting, was made lieutenant. Subsequently he married a West Indian lady, and on the breaking out of the American War, became a captain, and achieved considerable glory. At the end of the war he became a Lord of the Admiralty, and represented Plymouth, and afterwards Westminster, in Parliament. In 1793 he was made rear-admiral, and from this period to 1807 was constantly in action, and, in the words of Fox, "served his country with a zeal, a gallantry, a spirit, and a splendour that will reflect upon him immortal honour." In 1806 the old admiral was made Baron Gardner of Uttoxeter. He died 1810, at the age of sixty-eight.

A more lengthened career was that of John Jervis, of Meaford, the son of Swynfen Jervis, of Darlaston, Stone, and grandson of James Jervis, of Eccleshall. Born in 1734, this renowned seaman served in the British navy from his tenth year, passing through all grades of the service he was made a commander in 1793, and on the 14th February, 1797, commanded in the famous battle of St. Vincent, in which he obtained a victory over the Spanish fleet probably unparalleled in our naval history. The honour of this victory was shared by Nelson, Trowbridge, Collingwood, and the seamen, who all fought with great valour, and the skill of the commander was recognised by his being created Baron Jervis of Meaford and Earl St. Vincent. Subsequently he attained distinguished honour as First Lord of the Admiralty, and a reformer of naval abuses, and eventually was created Admiral of the Fleet, and died in 1823.

Among the British soldiers connected with the shire none have surpassed the intrepid Earl of Uxbridge, who shares the honours of Waterloo with Wellington. William Paget, the founder of the family, was a native of Wednesbury, but removing to London his son gained the confidence of Henry VIII., was created Baron Paget of Beaudesert, the family title until 1784. Henry William Paget, Earl of Uxbridge, of Beaudesert, and Marquis of Anglesey, was born 1768. As Lord Paget he passed through fifteen years of hard fighting between 1794 and 1809, and after a few years of rest he was again brought into activity upon the escape of Napoleon from Elba. With Waterloo his military career ended and his fame rests. As commander of the cavalry, his repeated and brilliant charges throughout the day entirely frustrated the reliant hopes of Napoleon by breaking up whole battalions of his "impregnable" guards—and it was generally believed that the Earl's intention of capturing Napoleon in person was only defeated by his being shot in the knee towards the close of the battle. This wound cost the Earl his leg, which was amputated in the house of a draper in Waterloo. Five days later the Earl was created Marquis of Anglesey, and in two months he returned to Beaudesert, where his brave and fearless life came to a close in 1854.

In the pages of Plot are recorded the names of many persons he considered entitled to publicity. Whilst we may pass these by, we can scarcely omit the names of the two prominent supporters of Protector Cromwell — Major-General Thomas Harrison and the learned John Goodwin. Both are reputed to have been born in Newcastle. Harrison was, according to some accounts, the son of an attorney, by others of a butcher of Newcastle. Advanced by his bravery to a prominent position in the State, he was one of the Court by which Charles I. was condemned, and signed the death warrant. At the Restoration he was one of the few who suffered for the act of the many, and was executed 1680.

Turning aside now to the men of genius, learning, and culture, whom Staffordshire claims among her honoured sons, it may with equal truth be said that in this category the distant past, with which these records deal more minutely, has no monopoly of the illustrious sons of the shire—saints and martyrs, founders of abbey or cell, bishops, leaders in the cause of Christianity or of liberty. Nor do the brief records of men like Izaak Walton, Charles Cotton, Samuel Johnson, David Garrick, and others incidentally touched upon in these pages exhaust the roll of men of light and leading.

Probably no shire has produced so many eminent antiquaries as Staffordshire. Elias Ashmole, the founder of the museum which bears his name at Oxford, was born at Lichfield; Sampson Erdeswick, the county's first historian, at Sandon; Thomas Allen and Simon Degge, at Uttoxeter; Yoxall, the home of Izaak Walton's ancestors, claims Thomas Astle, the author of the "History of Writing." Richard Gough lived at Perry Hall, Wyrley at Hampstead, and William Chetwynd at historic Ingestre. The principal historians of the county have almost all been Staffordshire men; Pitt was born near Wolverhampton; Stebbing Shaw, the author of the great county history which will never be superseded but, it may be hoped, will some day be completed, was a native of Stone; and Harwood was a native as well as the historian of Lichfield. Even Camden was closely allied to the county, his father, Sampson Camden, belonging to Lichfield, and the family for some generations were settled there and at Elford.

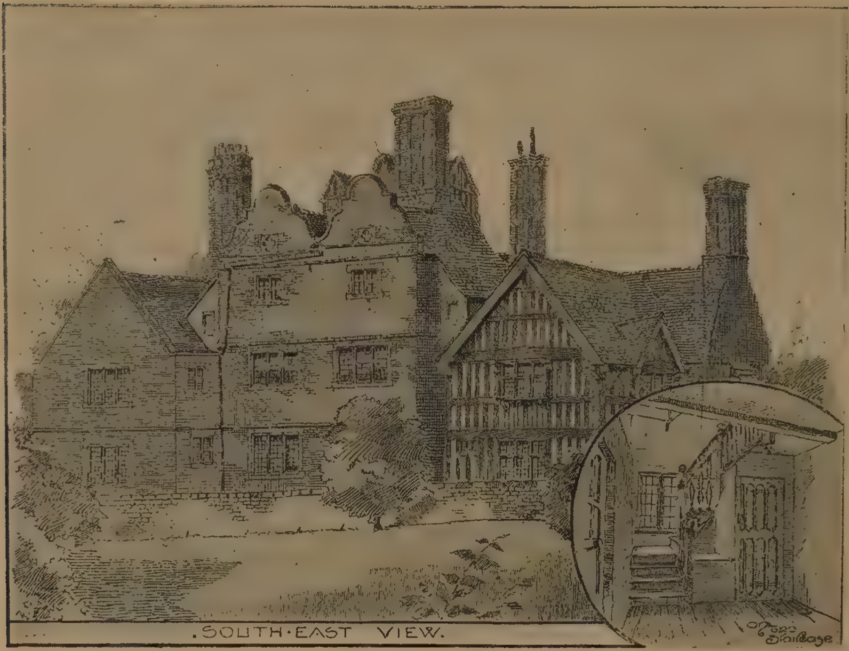
Among famous lawyers the shire claims among her sons, in addition to the famous chancellor, Thomas Parker (Lord Macclesfield), Talbot, Littleton, Whorwood, Thomas Gerard, Edmund Dudley, Richard Shelton, William Anson, and Richard Weston. The list of poets includes, besides those already enumerated, Elijah Fenton, of Shelton; Isaac Hawkins Browne, of Burton; and Edward Farmer, of Tamworth; of eminent churchmen, Archbishop Sheldon, founder of the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford; John Lightfoot, the great Biblical scholar and critic of the 17th century; Bishops Dudley, Stafford, Audley, Smalridge, Newton, Hurd, and Giffard, (Archbishop of Rheims), in addition to those already enumerated in these pages.

But when we come to the list of those associated with the county our list broadens considerably. Memories of Michael Drayton (whose quaint poetical topography can never be forgotten) cling close around Tixall; and during the childhood of our great modern novelist, best known as 'George Eliot,' the romantic district of Ellaston, near Weaver Hill, was her occasional home. Thomas Moore wrote his "Lalla Rookh" at Mayfield, near Ashbourne, and there passed some of his happiest days. Jean Jacques Rousseau lived at Wootton, not far from Ashbourne, too, and wrote his "Confessions" within the county of Staffordshire. Ward, the author of a once famous novel, "Tremaine," also lived near here; while Congreve, one of the wittiest dramatists of the Restoration, wrote his first drama at stately Ilam. The name of Jonathan Swift, too, is connected with the Four Crosses, and Sir William Dugdale was intimately associated with the shire. To mention the names of Richard Lovel Edgeworth, of Thomas Day, of Erasmus Darwin, and of Anna Seward, is merely to recall other notable names associated with the county which have already been mentioned in a recent chapter.

Nor must other notable names of sons of the shire be omitted from this enumeration. Thomas Guy, the founder of Guy's Hospital and of an almshouse at Tamworth, was born at Tamworth; Alderman Boydell, engraver, Lord Mayor of London, and the enterprising publisher of the *largest* edition of Shakespeare—with its "Boydell Gallery" of extra plates—was a native of Staffordshire; John Wyatt, the inventor of the first flax-spinning machinery and of the platform weighing machine, was a native of Weeford; and James Wyatt, the architectural "restorer," whose sham Gothic disfigures so many of our cathedrals, was born at Burton-on-Trent. The ancient Floyer family, of Hints, claim as their kinsman the celebrated physician of that name who sent Johnson to receive the Royal touch, and also wrote several curious medical tracts.

This catalogue of worthy sons of the shire is, however, after all, only the enumeration of a few men who have stood a little higher than their brethren with whom they have laboured, side by side; and it might be possible to compile a much fuller list, did space and other circumstances permit, of men whose lives, spent in the shire of which we have written in these pages, have contributed in some measure to the making of England, whose deeds are equally worthy of enrolment among the memorable episodes in the history of Staffordshire.

T. Garland, BEAUDESERT. *Cannock.*


.SOUTH·EAST VIEW.

THE OAK HOUSE, WEST BROMWICH.

An Interesting Restoration.

ONE of the finest specimens of the old timbered houses of the 16th century in South Staffordshire is the Oak House, West Bromwich, declared by Niven to be "one of the most interesting timber-built houses in the country." It is said to take its name from an ancient oak which stood on a green in front of the house, and it was for many years in the possession of the Turton family, a branch of the better known family of the same name at Alrewas. Originally it occupied considerably less ground than it now does, and was merely a yeoman's house; but in the early years of the

17th century John Turton the younger made considerable additions to it, in the style prevalent at that period. One of the most curious features is the old timbered lantern turret, which surmounts the building, and served as a look-out during the troublous times of the Civil War.* Other evidences of this period of disturbance are to be found in the caserne roofs, on each side of the turret, under which soldiers might sleep when billeted at the "Mansion House," as it was sometimes called in later days. The house is shown on Plot's map of Staffordshire, where it is called "The Oake;" and the arms of Turton are engraved in the margin.

By the munificence of Alderman Reuben Farley, the Oak House came into the possession of the Corporation of West Bromwich in the year 1895, and is now undergoing the most careful and painstaking restoration at the hands of Mr. W. H. Kendrick,† whereby the building will be put into a thoroughly sound condition, while nothing will be altered of the quaint old timbered house, which for architectural and archæological interest is not surpassed by any example now extant of 16th century domestic architecture.

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* Captain Robert Turton, of Birmingham, the Parliamentarian who opposed the passage of Prince Rupert's force through that town, was cousin to John Turton the younger.

† Mr. Kendrick had expressed his opinion, in a thorough and exhaustive report to the Council, that the building might be patched and repaired at an outlay of about £500; but he strongly recommended that it should be thoroughly restored at a cost of £1500. Upon this, the donor of the house addressed the following letter (which is worthy of a place among the records of worthy deeds of sons of the shire) to the Town Clerk of West Bromwich:—

"September 11th, 1895.

"Dear Sir,—Mr. Kendrick's report on the Oak House, which you sent me, I have read wtih much interest. This able and elaborate report bears upon it the impress of having been prepared by a loving hand, a reverential mind, a born archæologist. I agree with Mr. Kendrick that the right course to pursue is thorough restoration, and not reparation, although the estimated cost is in excess of what I had calculated upon. As the giver of the Oak House, I should not like the rates to be burdened with the cost of the restoration. I shall therefore be willing to undertake the restoration and the adaptation of the pleasure grounds, upon the lines laid down by Mr. Kendrick, and under his supervision, upon the following condition:—'That the Oak House shall be dedicated and maintained as a Museum and Art Gallery for the free use and enjoyment of the inhabitants of West Bromwich for ever.'

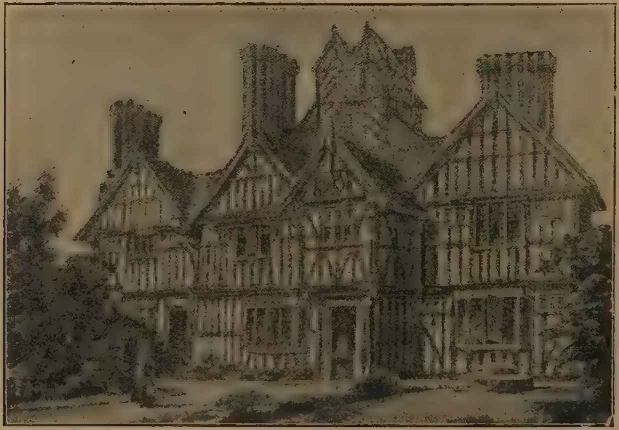
"Faithfully yours,

"Alfred Caddick, Esq., Town Clerk. "REUBEN FARLEY."

In recognition of this munificent gift, the Freedom of the Borough of West Bromwich was conferred upon Mr. Farley, on the 20th April, 1896, in a handsome casket, the wood of which was a portion of the original timber of the Oak House.

It is intended, when the restoration is completed, to convert the house into a museum. The old house itself will, however, be the most interesting feature of the museum, both from an archæological and architectural point of view. It contains some good examples of old ironwork, and a number of specimens of the simple wood-carving of the yeoman builder and his workmen, the balusters of the staircase forming a curious and interesting series of specimens, developing in intricacy of design as they proceed upward. The panelling of some of the rooms, too, is enriched with excellent carving in high and low relief, and the solid work of the old builders affords many valuable lessons in building construction.

Many interesting particulars as to the Turton families of West Bromwich and Oldbury will be found in the pages of Mrs. Willett's valuable History of West Bromwich.



THE OAK HOUSE, WEST BROMWICH (FRONT VIEW).

(From an old print.)

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WALTON AND COTTON'S FISHING HOUSE, BERESFORD DALE.

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